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Arab-Israeli Talks

'Arafat Meets Israel's Shahal; Sha'th Comments

'Arafat Promises Cooperation

NC0103120295 Paris AFP in English 1125 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, March 1 (AFP)—PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat met with Israel's Police Minister Moshe Shahal in the self-rule Gaza Strip for the first time Wednesday [1 March], and promised to cooperate for Israeli security.

"I repeat that we understand totally Israel's security needs," 'Arafat told reporters after a two-hour meeting with Shahal.

"We will try to overcome (problems) with more joint cooperation," 'Arafat said, adding that the talks also covered Palestinian prisoners, safe passages between the autonomous Gaza Strip and Jericho and the borders of self-rule areas.

Israel has pressed 'Arafat to do more to prevent attacks by Palestinian militants before proceeding to the next stage of autonomy: Israeli army redeployment on the West Bank and Palestinian elections.

Shahal said he brought best wishes from the government to 'Arafat and the Palestinian people for the 'Id al-Fitr holiday starting Thursday and marking the end of Ramadan, the Moslem fasting month.

Chief Palestinian negotiator, Nabil Sha'th said no agreements were expected from Wednesday's meeting.

"He (Shahal) came also to listen very carefully, and our primary problem was the prisoners ... we appreciate the fact that he was not here to make decisions," Sha'th said.

He said Shahal would report back to Rabin, and "some acts of improvement will take place."

The PLO has demanded the release from Israeli jails of more than 5,000 Palestinian prisoners.

Sha'th Views Meeting, Denies Jihad Remarks

TA0103121895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yasir 'Arafat says he is willing to begin talks on the final status of the peace agreement. Cabinet Minister Moshe Shahal, who was one of the negotiators with the Palestinians, this morning visited the Gaza Strip to offer the government's good wishes to 'Arafat for the Muslim festival of 'Id al-Fitr. Shahal was accompanied by senior army and police officers for the practical aspects of his talks with the Palestinians. Mark Weiss has details:

[Begin recording] [Weiss] Police Minister Shahal came to Gaza to congratulate Yasir 'Arafat in the name of the Israeli Government on the occasion of the Muslim holiday of 'Id al-Fitr, which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Yasir 'Arafat said that the Palestinians are ready now to commence talks on the permanent settlements.

['Arafat] We are ready because, as had been mentioned, as soon as possible and not exceeding the beginning of the third year; this is what had been mentioned and what had been signed in the DOP [Declaration of Principles] Washington and in Cairo.

[Weiss] A similar statement was expressed by Nabil Sha'th, who called for permanent stage talks parallel to the negotiations on the interim stage. The Palestinians raised the questions of the release of prisoners, safe passage, and lifting the closure.

On the closure, Police Minister Shahal would only commit himself to saying that he is certain that things will be easier in the future. On plans for separation, the police minister said that separation is not a punishment and any measures taken by Israel will not negate agreements already signed with the PLO.

Nabil Sha'th denied press reports that he had called for a jihad, but warned of catastrophe if the peace process fails. [end recording]

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria, Egypt Said To Seek Summit Ahead of Christopher Tour

MM2802162295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 28 Feb 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Arab diplomatic sources in Cairo have said that a summit meeting will be held soon in the Syrian capital between Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, after a period of relative coolness in relations since the Cairo quadripartite summit that grouped Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, King Husayn of Jordan, in addition to President Mubarak.

The sources stressed that the summit will precede U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region, which will take him to Damascus, Gaza, and Israel.

The sources said that the summit will focus on ending the coolness in Egyptian-Syrian relations and on the peace process in light of the changes and the obstacles Israel is placing on the various tracks, as well as on the Arab position on the renewal of the Nuclear Weapons Non-proliferation Treaty.

The summit will also discuss the efforts and contacts aimed at achieving reconciliation and clarifying Arab relations in the wake of Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid's visits to a number of Arab states, including Gulf states, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. He is expected to make other visits to Arab Maghreb states.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 21 Feb

NC2802100695

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 21 February edition of the Arabic-language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Al-Azhar Imam, Others Address Award Ceremony
2. Columnist Defends al-Azhar's Religious Role
3. Columnist Praises al-Azhar Imam's Anti-Extremist Remarks
4. Islam Gives Non-Muslims Equal Citizenship Rights
5. Religious Argument in Court Against Controversial Film Cited
6. Mixed Views on Proposed Marriage Contract

AL-AZHAR IMAM, OTHERS ADDRESS AWARD CEREMONY

Pages 14 and 15 contain an approximately 2,500-word report by Muhammad al-Abnudi and Mamduh al-'Ashri on a ceremony organized by 'AQIDATI to present awards to outstanding students at al-Azhar's schools and colleges. In his address to the ceremony, al-Azhar grand imam, Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq, praises the newspaper for honoring al-Azhar students and encouraging Islamic education. The report cites him as saying that al-Azhar has some 20,000 foreign students this year and that it sent 5,000 'ulema abroad "to teach, spread the word of God through good preaching, follow the situation of Muslims in their places, teach them the language of the Koran [Arabic], and strengthen their affiliation with Islam and the nation of the Koran."

Noting the efforts and role of al-Azhar 'ulema throughout Egypt, Jad-al-Haqq says: "Some news media, which present al-Azhar 'ulema in a way incompatible with their efforts and pioneering role, must stop doing so. I hope the media will stop underestimating this effort." He reportedly adds: "The 'ulema never hesitate to perform their duty, but perhaps the ways are not always made easy for them. Nevertheless, they are doing their duty to resist the misleading thoughts that come to us from abroad. Some news media are promoting this thought, and not all media channels are open to the 'ulema to refute the falsehoods."

Addressing the ceremony, Samir Rajab, the newspaper's board chairman, congratulates al-Azhar imam for winning the King Faysal International Prize for Islamic sciences and says this is an honor for all of Egypt. He says the al-Azhar imam deserves the prize and more, adding: "We have followed his trips to spread religious awareness in Egypt's governorates, and we all paused at his explicit positions in which he condemned terrorism. His words echoed greatly all over the world."

Speaking for the Awqaf Ministry, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Abd-al-Rahim praises the initiative of the newspaper and says it clearly shows that 'AQIDATI officials primarily aim at "spreading the true teachings of religion, combating extremism, and renouncing violence."

COLUMNIST DEFENDS AL-AZHAR'S RELIGIOUS ROLE

A 500-word article by Basyuni al-Hulwani on page 6 says the winning by al-Azhar imam Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq of King Faysal International Prize for the service of Islam "crowns his eminence efforts in serving Islamic thought and defending the causes of persecuted Muslims in the world." The writer says the prize shows recognition of al-Azhar's pioneering role is serving Islam and Muslims.

Al-Hulwani adds: "Recently, al-Azhar and its 'ulema have come in for many attacks, some dwarfs have encroached on the biggest and most ancient Islamic institution in the world, and some pens have practiced intellectual terrorism against al-Azhar and its men to weaken their role and prevent them from spreading their message. But thanks to God almighty, and thanks to the wisdom of al-Azhar's shaykh and his rational and balanced view of all developments in society, al-Azhar remained intact, and the spears of the rancorous ones failed to harm it." The writer argues that the strength of al-Azhar is a strength to Egypt, and that campaigns against this religious establishment are "malicious attempts aimed at weakening Egypt's cultural message and undermining its role as a leading Islamic country."

COLUMNIST PRAISES AL-AZHAR IMAM'S ANTI-EXTREMIST REMARKS

In a 400-word article on page 1, Samir Rajab begins by citing some young men in the city of Luxor as complaining to him about the extremist attacks that hurt tourism in the city and, consequently, their jobs. Rajab then adds: "Almost at the same time, the al-Azhar shaykh was saying in Tanta that our government is performing all the Islamic duties ordered by God almighty; that its laws, on the whole, conform with the Islamic shari'ah; and that those who cast doubt and practice aggression are in fact fighting against God and his prophet and must be punished."

Rajab comments: "So those who tried to attack tourism and tourists are nothing but sinful criminals who wanted to threaten the safety of society and terrorize the innocent in a state that is eager, as Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq said, to apply the tolerant Islamic shari'ah." He adds: "Thanks to the al-Azhar shaykh for this clarification, and now the other quarters and services—the non-security ones of course—must move as the grand imam moved until terrorism is irrevocably uprooted."

ISLAM GIVES NON-MUSLIMS EQUAL CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS

In an 800-word article on page 7, Islamic thinker Muhammad 'Amarah writes part 1 of an article on "Equality in Citizenship" between Muslims and non-Muslims in the Islamic state. He cites Koranic verses and Islamic principles to determine that "citizens from religious minorities—the people of the books [Christians and Jews]—who live with the Muslim majority and share with it affiliation with and loyalty to the homeland, are partners in citizenship and must be treated with reverence and justice; this is a duty imposed by God on the Muslim majority." That the Muslim majority makes the Islamic shari'ah the law of the state, 'Amarah says, is not a violation of the rights of non-Muslims. He explains that Christianity, which separates religion and state and does not have its own laws to organize politics, economy, and worldly affairs, "accepts, in all cases, a law to organize relationships in the state. If this law is Islamic, reflecting the Islamic identity of the state, this does not belittle Christianity or represent an alternative to it. Moreover, this law, which treats all citizens equally, is part of the religious belief of the majority with which the Christian minority is living."

RELIGIOUS ARGUMENT IN COURT AGAINST CONTROVERSIAL FILM CITED

In a 2,000-word report on page 18, Musa Hal cites the arguments of al-Azhar lawyer and the plaintiff in a court session examining whether "The Immigrant," a film largely seen as a dramatization of the story of Prophet Joseph, violates Islamic teachings. The al-Azhar lawyer says al-Azhar insists on its request that the film not be released for viewing because it offends the prophets. Addressing the film director and some of its stars attending the court session, the lawyer reportedly said: "Al-Azhar fully respects the arts and creativity. But we do not accept that creativity harm sanctities and religion. Al-Azhar supports you, artists of Egypt, as long as you uphold ethics and virtue and avoid attacking Islam and the homeland." The lawyer is cited as shouting at one stage in reaction to defense comments: "We are suffering from terrorism; what we are seeing now from the other side is intellectual terrorism, terrorism against Islamic thought."

The plaintiff analyzes the plot and the scenario of "The Immigrant" to prove that the film is really presenting, in a distorted way, the story of Prophet Joseph. He says the film offends Egyptians and shows that Israel has a territorial right to Egypt. He reportedly says that "Al-Azhar presented reports to the State Security about the film's racist policy, which qualifies the selling of Egypt's land to the sons of Israel as the film claims the land to be theirs." Seeing the film as "a foreign scheme," the plaintiff maintains that "France's financing of the film is suspicious, and is aimed at attacking Islam and relinquishing the prestige of Egypt and the Egyptians."

MIXED VIEWS ON PROPOSED MARRIAGE CONTRACT

In a 2,000-word report on pages 16 and 17, Muna 'Abd-al-Na'im asks some religious and public figures whether they support or oppose a proposed marriage contract whose authors say was designed to protect women rights. The document includes items such as the wife's right to work, travel, compensation, and divorce in case the man takes another wife. The authors are working for the legitimization of the contract and its adoption by the government. Some figures asked by the reporter support the document, others approve of certain items in the document, and others strongly reject it as a violation of Islam's idea of marriage. An example from the third category is "prominent Islamic thinker" Dr. Mustafa al-Shak'ah. He says that the authors of the document "are conspiring against marriage life," and making marriage "a losing commercial deal from the beginning." He reportedly adds: "Other attempts were previously made by some women who are extremists in their hatred of Islam, and they failed. This project is similarly doomed because it is ridiculous and has no basis in Islam."

Political Islam Review: AL-NUR 22 Feb

NC2802155595

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 22 February edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-NUR that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Nuclear Armament Seen as "Sacred Duty"

NUCLEAR ARMAMENT SEEN AS "SACRED DUTY"

A 500-word report by Majdi al-Daghir on pages 1 and 2 cites the views of Islamic scholars on the issue of nuclear weapons and the Egyptian and Israeli positions on it.

Islamic Preacher Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali points out that Egypt's insistence not to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] until Israel does "is a decision backed by every Muslim." He wonders how Egypt can sign a treaty on a weapon it does not own.

Al-Ghazali calls for boycotting Israel if it insists on not signing the NPT. He describes normalization with Israel as "betrayal of God and Islam, because it is an unauthentic member in the body of the Islamic nation only treatable by amputation."

He believes that the Islamic nation should own the same weapon Israel threatens us with and that it should "excel Israel" in that weapon.

Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi remarks that the recent Israeli threats "are void," adding that Israel is built on "terrorism, aggression, and treachery." "We have to see Israel as a state that has expansionist ambitions. Its claim to seek peace is false and rejected," he says.

Islamic preacher Shaykh Muhammad Hassan emphasizes that the Islamic nation should be prepared for potential Israeli threats. He emphasizes the need for a "united Islamic decision concerning normalization with Israel." He sees no need for Gulf states to rush toward Israel "in that shameful manner."

Mufti of the Republic Shaykh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi praises the Egyptian stance on the Israeli threats. "We do not make peace with whoever harbors evil intentions toward us," he remarks.

Islamic writer Dr. 'A'ishah 'Abd-al-Rahman, better known as Bint al-Shati', criticizes the negative attitude of the Muslim world. 'Abd-al-Rahman believes that arming the Muslim nation with nuclear weapons is "a sacred duty" since "the enemy" owns it.

Al-Azhar Imam Views Role, Extremism, Israel

NC0103100595 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 23 Feb 95 p 2

[First of an unspecified number of parts of an interview with al-Azhar Grand Imam Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [AL-JUMHURIYAH] The long history of the holy al-Azhar emphasizes the unity of the Islamic nation. But why has this nation recently been plagued by disturbances in the name of Islam? There are problems in Algeria, Afghanistan, Somalia, and other countries, and these problems are created by groups that raise the slogans of Islam and the banners of our tolerant religion. What is the reason and what is the remedy?

[Jad-al-Haqq] Yes, these disturbances do exist. But Islam disapproves of these acts, whether their purpose is to create division among the people or to rebel against rulers. Killing and bloodshed are not Islam's way of putting things right. But before we search for the remedy, we must first diagnose the illness and know its reasons. The situations in the countries where these disturbances occur must be studied to find out whether the causes are local or foreign, that is, if there are foreign hands seeking to destroy Islamic societies from within.

Hostile trends coming from Europe and elsewhere show bad intentions toward the Islamic world. A few days ago I read in newspapers some statements by the NATO secretary general in which he said that after the collapse of communism, our only enemy now is Islam. This is a statement by a prominent official commanding the united U.S.-European military power.

We must search for the reasons on the ground. For example, when free elections were organized in Algeria by the non-Islamist government, there was confirmation that the Islamists had won and would rule the country. Why did the Algerian Government disavow that democratic experience and obstruct the elections? In Afghanistan, the Islamic factions were united in the war against communism; they forced the communist army out of the country and afterward they began fighting against each other. What is the reason? This also applies to Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and other Islamic countries complaining of unrest and bloodshed.

People outside these countries do not know the facts. First, the facts must be found, and this can only be done by studying the situation in the field.

Al-Azhar tried. It extended an invitation to the heads of the parties to the conflict in Somalia and held a discussion with them. They finally agreed to demonstrate brotherhood and cooperate to build their country. But when they returned, they resumed fighting. Was this an internal affair or did it have its foreign reasons? Muslims outside these unstable countries must know.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] But what is al-Azhar's role in this regard?

[Jad-al-Haqq] These are political issues and al-Azhar can only give its opinion. Al-Azhar's role is only educational, and it offers guidance, but the implementation is in the hands of others. The governments in the Islamic countries are the sides that should be addressed in this regard.

But al-Azhar wants to ask about its role. We had an educational mission in Algeria consisting of 300 'ulema; they were the vanguards of teaching the Arabic language and true Islam. Why was this mission sent back to Egypt and why did it stop playing its cultural role there? No one knows, and nobody told us why. We had a similar mission in Somalia, and the same thing happened to it; it returned to Egypt. Why? No one knows, and nobody told us why the mission returned. The al-Azhar mission in Somalia taught Arabic and Islamic religion to some 7,000 Somali students.

We need to study and understand this. If disputes and wars in the Islamic countries have intellectual reasons, then we can solve them through the al-Azhar ulema. [passage omitted]

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Let us move on to specific issues in the Arab part of the Muslim world. The dispute with Israel continues. What is happening is that some Arab states are rushing toward Israel. Does this mean that we are weak against Israel?

[Jad-al-Haqq] Inter-Arab coordination is certainly absent in this connection. Since late President Anwar al-Sadat, Egypt has tried to undertake collective action. MENA House negotiations should not be overlooked. All the parties to the issue were invited to these negotiations and their seats were arranged around the table. But they did not show up. They kept fighting the Egyptian inclination following al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977. This weakened the position of individual states.

Egypt proceeded alone because the others refused to lend a helping hand. The Camp David Accords were signed after strenuous negotiations in which the United States acted as mediator. Egypt regained all its land and the Taba dispute remained outstanding. Egypt put in strenuous efforts on that issue during President Husni Mubarak's time, until it regained its rights through international arbitration. Egypt accepted arbitration because it trusted the authenticity of documents determining its international borders. It sought the help of its experts to assess the situation and finally won the case and restored full rights to its land.

Egypt extended invitations to the parties to the issue from the outset. Had they accepted the invitation, they could have saved the Arab region long years in which problems multiplied. The most serious of these problems is the Jewish settlements that were built on the occupied Arab territories in the West Bank, Gaza, and Golan. The discord that prevailed in the beginning is behind the weakness we see now. It pushed the rejectionists of yesterday toward Israel secretly. Who would have known that secret talks were going on between the PLO and Israel in Norway? The outcome of these talks surprised the entire world. All this happened following the all-embracing talks in Madrid in Spain. The two sides reached agreements that we all know are difficult to implement. We know the reasons for this difficulty. Then Jordan settled its affairs with Israel independently. May God help Syria and Lebanon.

Everybody rejected the collective solution Egypt submitted from the start. This is the result. There can be no solution with Israel other than collective confrontation, particularly since we seek peace rather than war. We want to dedicate our time and effort to solving the problems of our communities in the educational, development, and production fields through relying on our own resources.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Let us turn to incidents inside Egypt, the land of al-Azhar. There are still extremists who use murder and bloodshed in search of their goals. They talk in the name of Islam. How can that happen and how can it continue for years?

[Jad-al-Haqq] First, the term extremism is not known in Islam. Islam knows crimes and determines punishment for them. There are stipulated punishments [Hudud] revealed in the Koran. What was not mentioned in the Koran was included in the prophetic tradition that explains it. This tradition is one of the first sources of legislation. Islam has discretionary punishments [Ta'zir], which are left to the judge's discretion depending on the nature of and circumstances surrounding the crime. The trial treats the crime. As for extremism, it has other cures.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] How can it be remedied?

[Jad-al-Haqq] Extremism is the product of erroneous thought within and outside Islam. The remedy is proper education right from the start and a follow-up of the conduct of those we educate. Islam pays attention to the proper upbringing of children from an early age. [passage omitted] This education must be based on Islam's lofty principles. These principles must be instilled early in the minds of the young. The problem is that school curricula are changed without proper attention to this point. We have frequently warned against this lack of attention and al-Azhar has done its duty in this connection through the work of official committees. Education is not an isolated process but is influenced by other things like the media. For example, the media portray crime in a detailed manner that affects the viewer and instills erroneous concepts in the minds of the young. If we examine television as an effective media source, we are confronted with surprising things. The many bad things shown on television overwhelm the good things and dissipate their benefits. Commercials are presented in a manner that flouts morality, virtue, and public taste. We know that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. This applies to the movement of bodies in the physical world. But in affairs of morality and ethics, the reaction to the things that the media broadcast is much stronger and takes many forms. Let us take one example: Some magazines and newspapers intentionally insult religion and religious scholars. Their writers, editors, and columnists interpret religion wrongly. They say untrue things about religion and misrepresent religious teachings. When religious scholars send corrections to these writings, they refuse to publish them or, if they do, they do not publish them in full. If we accept that these newspapers and magazines' actions are merely extremism, not the demolition of a religious society, should we not expect reactions to it? These reactions are being called extremism. [passage omitted]

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] But the Islamists are intimidating the people.

[Jad-al-Haqq] Those who do this are not Islamists and do not represent Islam. They are criminals who must be punished. Every individual who challenges public order and the state's authority and powers must be punished. Such an individual is not an Islamist at all. Those who make mischief in the land are the enemies of God and his prophet. The Koran sets forth in detail how such people must be punished. Verse 33 of Surat al-Ma'idah says: "The punishment of those who wage war against God and his apostle and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is execution, crucifixion, the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the hereafter."

The punishment is set forth with such detail so that it might take into account the degree of guilt in waging war against God and the prophet and making mischief in the land. It is meant to be a deterrent. Specific Koranic punishments are meant to deter. If each specific punishment is carried out according to the specific crime, those who now use the name of Islam to terrorize the public will disappear, because we will be enforcing on them the rules of Islam that they profess.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] These are the punishments for the wicked and those who wage war against God and his prophet. What should be done with those who finance them?

[Jad-al-Haqq] They also make mischief in the land and are subject to punishment.

Palestinian Affairs

Sha'th: 'No Option Other Than Jihad' If Talks Fail

TA0103124195 Gaza AL-WATAN in Arabic 28 Feb 95 p 3

[Report by Salih al-Na'ami]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, the official responsible for the planning and international cooperation portfolio in the Palestinian Authority [PA], has strongly criticized Israel for placing obstacles on the path of negotiations. Sha'th, who was speaking to AL-WATAN on 25 February, said that Israel has completely paralyzed the negotiations process.

He accused circles in the Israeli Labor Party and Israel army of endeavoring to prevent the PA from extending its control over the West Bank.

Sha'th accused Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin of supporting the hawks in his cabinet. He said they think with the mentality of occupation rather than the mentality of peace.

In response to a question on steps the PA might take to confront Israeli measures, Sha'th stressed that the PA is waging a struggle at the negotiating table. If it becomes certain that the negotiations process with Israel is ending in failure, there will be no option other than jihad. Dr. Sha'th added, however, that the decision to stop the negotiations process with Israel will be an extremely grave one.

On the possibility that the Israeli Likud Party might come to power and the effect this might have on the negotiations with the PA, Sha'th said: "According to my viewpoint, there is no difference between the Likud and Labor."

Sha'th added that colonialist intentions still prevail among Israeli circles. He hinted that both the Likud and Labor act in the interests of Israel and that the Labor Party is actually implementing the Likud's program.

Sha'th Criticizes Israeli Closure Measures

JN2802192795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 28 FEB 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the National Authority, today criticized Israel for its continued military siege on the Palestinian territories. After a meeting in Jericho today with the head of the World Bank delegation, the donor countries representatives, and Terri Larsen, the representative of the UN secretary general in the Palestinian territories, Dr. Nabil Sha'th said that the military siege has had a destructive impact on the Palestinian economy and on the donor countries work.

For his part, Larsen described the economic situation in Gaza as extremely difficult. He added that the World Bank's primary task is to finance the current expenditures. Larsen said that the International (Halls) Fund, which finances the five sectors of health, education, social affairs, tourism, and taxes, is empty.

Qaddumi Comments on Peace Process, Negotiations

MM2802150995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Feb 95 p 5

[Interview with PLO Political Department Head Faruq Qaddumi by unidentified correspondent in Tunis; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] The PLO Executive Committee has decided to continue negotiations within the framework of the peace process, and to work to push these negotiations forward. But you have said in a press statement today that you are calling for the dropping of the Oslo Accord once and for all. What has happened to the attitude of Abu-al-Luft [Faruq Qaddumi]? What are your views, particularly as you were known to advocate attaching reservations to the Oslo Accord but not annulling it altogether.

[Qaddumi] It is a known fact that we have numerous reservations about the Oslo Accord. We at the National Council said yes to the International Peace Conference due to the circumstances that engulfed the peace process and the Arab region at the time.

Then came the Oslo Agreements—but without meeting the ambitions of the Palestinian people. On the contrary, they contained a lot of drawbacks. Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, it was decided to let the experiment continue to see whether it will succeed on the ground of reality. It was a hard choice, but it was approved by the majority of the members of the central institutions.

The experiment began to take its course on the ground of Palestinian reality. But unfortunately, it was evident that Israel was taking a stubborn stand and was trying to impose its own version of the interpretation of the accord's principles, and to sign agreements with the Palestinian side that were below the ceiling set by the Declaration of Principles agreements.

Then came official statements from the Israeli Government led by a statement from Yitzhaq Rabin in which he said "The provisions of these agreements must be changed." He followed his statement by practices that contradicted the provisions of the Oslo Accord. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] In your opinion, what would the Palestinians gain from the suspension of the negotiations? The options before the Palestinians now seem limited. Is there an alternative to the peace process?

[Qaddumi] The suspension of the negotiations will mean that the Palestinian people categorically reject all the results that emanated from the negotiations and which are unacceptable. In other words, the Palestinian people would never make any concessions in respect of their national rights, and that this pressure tactic on Israel's part will not help to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

We affirm that we support the peace process and we have said yes to peace, but on the basis defined by the initiative of former U.S.President George Bush (Land for Peace) and UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, as well as on the basis of the restoration of the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people and the just solution of the refugee question. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] We wish to go back to your call for the annulment of the Oslo Accord once and for all. Do you think it is possible to back out of this accord now? Would the international conditions permit this?

[Qaddumi] Yes. Backing out of the accord does not mean abandoning the peace process but only abandoning the results that stemmed from these very unfortunately frivolous negotiations.

We say that the parties concerned with the political settlement must abide by the American initiative which formed the basis for the Madrid Conference. We said at the beginning of the Declaration of Principles contract that it does not meet the ambitions of the Palestinian people and totally conflicts with the provisions of the American initiative. We entered the peace process on a clear-cut basis. We will not abide by anything that conflicts with this initiative.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you not think that by calling for the immediate suspension of the negotiations you will find yourself in tune, indeed in great harmony, with those who opposed the Oslo Accord and who rejected it in part and whole. By those, I mean the opposition factions both in Damascus and outside it?

[Qaddumi] We have said from the beginning that we have our reservations. If we were actually to enumerate the issues we oppose, we would find ourselves in the ranks of those who oppose the Oslo Accord. We have not intervened in these negotiations because we did not want it said that those who had registered reservations about the Oslo Accord have now joined the negotiations, because we were certain that the negotiations were proceeding along an unsound course and will entail results that are harmful to the peace process and will increase tension in the region. If no solution can be found for the issues under discussion, that situation will lead to the destruction of this settlement.

We are anxious to see the peace process moving in the right direction. For this reason we watched the negotiations closely right from their start: from the first and second Cairo Agreements and indeed even from the Declaration of Principles Agreement. We were fully confident that these provisions will not serve the cause of peace in the region but will lead to further tension, because they do not meet the Palestinian people's demands, which are founded on the basis on which the political peace settlement was initiated. We gave this experiment some time to prove to those who claimed that they can succeed in securing the Palestinian demands in the political settlement that they were actually overoptimistic.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It was announced some time ago that a Palestinian alliance had been formed and that Bassam Al-Shak'ah was the secretary general of this alliance, which is comprised of the opposition factions, and that this alliance has announced that it looks forward to bringing about President 'Arafat's downfall and that it is demanding Jerusalem and the return of the refugees. What do you say about this alliance?

[Qaddumi] If it indicates anything at all it indicates that the Palestinian people and their national figures have been dissatisfied with the developments that followed the Oslo Accord and that they are not convinced that the negotiations will end in results that will serve the peace process.

This is not the first attempt by national figures—or rather by one specific national figure. Brother Bassam al-Shak'ah is one of the national figures and he has the right to express himself in the manner he deems fit. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Are you not afraid that an internecine Palestinian versus Palestinian conflict might flare up, particularly as accusations were exchanged recently between those who call themselves the Fatah Hawks and those of the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, particularly after the Palestinian police arrested members of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad? The Palestinian Authority has admitted that it has arrested some Hamas activists who had been planning to stage suicide attacks inside Israel, which means that the Palestinian police are now performing the same role that the Israeli police and the Israeli Army had been performing? How do you see Palestinian-Palestinian relations inside the territories?

[Qaddumi] First of all, I do not fear an outbreak of internecine fighting among the Palestinians, because the Fatah Hawks are fully aware of this fact. Al-Qassam battalions too are aware of this fact. We underwent a sad experience few months ago which almost did away with the lives of many Palestinians from Gaza, as a result of the tension gripping the region at that time, following U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit and after Rabin incited the Palestinians against Hamas.

As we have said, the Hamas Movement is a national movement with whom we might differ in our methods and tactics but which is still a part of the national battle. It also differs from the fundamentalist movements that now exist in the Arab countries.

We are in touch with Hamas, which opposes the Oslo Accord. Hamas is free to take the stand it wants. Hamas has not been disturbing the peace inside Gaza. But by his constant incitement Yitzhaq Rabin aims to make the Palestinians fight each other within their resistance factions. He always falsely claims that Hamas has been agitating against peace.

I say with all clarity and frankness—and this is our right and has been eshrined in all international laws—that it is the right of any people who fall under the yoke of occupation to resist foreign occupation by all means. So that as long as there remains one single Israeli soldier on Palestinian soil, then it is the right of every Palestinian, be he from Fatah or from Hamas, to resist the Israeli occupation and resist the Israeli soldiers.

If the Israeli forces were to withdraw from Palestinian territory, this would mean that we would assume the responsibility for security in our areas—if, that is, Israel honored its pledges. Unfortunately, however, Israel killed three Palestinian policemen as they were performing their guard duties. These men were members of the Palestinian police force, which is a recognized one. They also killed another professor, Hani al-'Abid, in Gaza and attacked the Palestinian Authority and actually carried out the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre at Hebron. For them it is all right to kill. Our blood is cheap, but their blood is precious.

This is something we do not accept. They claim to want peace and security. But peace and security demand first and foremost the evacuation of the Israeli forces.

Terrorism is occupation. The biggest manifestation of terrorism is the Israeli occupation of our lands. The biggest manifestation of terrorism is the erection of settlements and the expropriation of Palestinian lands. The biggest manifestation of terrorism is that of depriving the Palestinian people of their sources of subsistence. This is what the Palestinian people are suffering as a result of the collective punishment represented by the closure of Gaza and Jericho and by the placing of the people under the shadow of starvation, the loss of security, and even the loss of peace.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT]: Is it true what is being reported—that efforts have been made to persuade Abu al-Lutuf to agree to meet with Israeli officials?

[Qaddumi] No such attempts have taken place. They know that Brother Abu al-Lutuf does not do anything without a political price being paid in return. If Israel were to clearly recognize the right of the refugee Palestinian people to return to their homeland, then I would be prepared to negotiate with them. The return of the refugees to their land.... I want to go to Jaffa, why then should I not negotiate with them?

The Jew is a human being. But some of the fanatical Zionist generations have come to usurp the land and kill the Palestinian people. There are Jews who are not Israelis and have their own views on peace. There is a peace tendency in Israel which is growing day by day. But the old generation of Rabin and Shamir and the generations that grew up in the United States such as Binyamin Netanyahu have no respect for human rights and do not work for peace but for the destruction of our people. This is what we are resisting.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Why did you not go to Cairo?

[Qaddumi] Because I oppose the Oslo Accord.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] We understand that you stipulated two basic conditions for attending the meeting: first, that a meeting of the Fatah Central Committee be held beforehand, and that it be held in Tunisia. Is this true?

[Qaddumi] The headquarters are in Tunisia and the meetings therefore take place in Tunisia. The Central Committee meeting should be preceded by a meeting of the Executive Committee to discuss many things that we have not discussed but which we must discuss so that they may cast light on all the events in the region. Tunisia is the base, and meetings should always be held in Tunisia. This is a matter on which no two individuals can differ. You note that Brother Abu 'Ammar always passes through Tunisia to affirm this fact. Tunisia is the headquarters of the PLO.

'Urayqat Denies Offer To Swap Jerusalem for Other Area

NC0103080395 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Telephone interview with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the Palestinian Authority, in Jericho, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Dr. 'Urayqat: Welcome to Voice of the Arabs.

['Urayqat] Thank you.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] You have recently been cited as saying that the peace process between you and the Israelis is passing through a dangerous juncture and is almost approaching collapse. How true is this?

['Urayqat] Actually the peace process is going through a difficult and serious impasse. We are now experiencing great difficulties resulting from the failure to implement the interim agreement. As you know, the agreement signed in Oslo involved a whole package. It begins with an interim agreement starting with Gaza and Jericho. Three months later, Gaza and Jericho were supposed to link up with the rest of the West Bank. It also included elections, redeployment, and then negotiations on the final stage. What happened is that the Israeli government has decided to make Gaza-Jericho a testing ground, not to implement the interim agreement—eight months have passed now and it is still not implemented—and to apply a policy of strangulation, extortion, mass punishment, continued settlement building, and refusal to release prisoners. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-'Aziz] There is an Israeli offer to swap territories close to Gaza for Jerusalem. How accurate is this rumored offer and what is the Palestinian stance on it?

['Urayqat] First of all, reports on swapping territories are completely groundless and untrue. There is no such offer. Secondly, Jerusalem is not subject to a swap, trade, or any change; it is not for sale. To us, Jerusalem is the key to the solution and to the conflict. As His Excellency President 'Arafat has stated, Jerusalem involves four red lines: The Arab, Islamic, Christian, and Palestinian lines. There can be no just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in this region unless East Jerusalem and our sacred sites there are placed under Palestinian Arab jurisdiction.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] In light of your talks with the Israeli side, what do we expect in the future?

['Urayqat] There is a plan to hold a meeting in Cairo in the second week of March to continue the negotiations on the elections. We hope that the joint drafting will begin seriously. But frankly speaking, unless these talks go hand in hand with negotiations for redeployment, I believe we will remain at an impasse. Breaking the impasse on the Palestinian track lies first and foremost in finding suitable circumstances for implementing the interim agreement, which would include redeploying the Israeli troops outside the densely populated areas in the West Bank, reviewing the laws, transferring powers, and holding general legislative elections. [passage omitted]

Sources: No Palestinian Elections Before Jun 1996

TA2802153995 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 27 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian elections will not be conducted before the conclusion of Israeli elections, slated to be held in June 1996.

This was stated to AL-MANAR by diplomatic sources. The sources added: Israeli leaders have clearly informed Palestinian officials about this matter, and, consequently, talks on Palestinian elections are no more than a waste of time.

These sources said that in terms of partisan struggles the Israeli arena is passing through a sensitive stage with the approaching preparations for the upcoming election campaign and that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin does not intend to lose votes either by allowing Palestinian elections to be conducted or by reaching agreement on this issue. The same applies to the redeployment of Israeli forces in the West Bank.

These sources affirm that the Israeli leadership has proposed to withdraw its forces for three days from West Bank population centers so that Palestinian elections can be conducted, after which the forces would return to their positions. The Palestinian side, however, has turned down this proposal.

PLO Said To Hand Over 'Israeli Agent' to Israelis

MM2802161295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Feb 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Ali al-Salih: "PLO Moves Israeli Agent From Tunis to Gaza Strip"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London—In a sudden, exciting, and controversial development, the PLO last Monday freed one of the most dangerous Israeli spies, who had been in prison in Tunis for over a year, according to a statement made to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT by a Palestinian security source.

According to the security source, who asked to remain anonymous, the spy A.A. 'A, who was arrested in January 1994, was moved at 1530 last Monday from Tunis to Cairo aboard a Tunisian plane, accompanied by Abu-'Ali Shahin, the military official who was expelled from the Gaza Strip and whom Israel refused to allow to return to the self-rule areas like other PLO members.

Although this spy did not stand trial in Tunis, as the security official says, he made serious confessions about his activities that led to the death of numerous Palestinians in the Strip.

According to the security source, it is not known whether the spy's release is part of a deal to exchange Palestinian prisoners and detainees held in Israeli jails. But the spy was handed over at the Rafah crossing point at 0430 last Tuesday. The source believes that the spy was handed over to Israel, not the Palestinian Authority's security services.

It is worth mentioning that Tunisian security services arrested 'Adnan Yasin, who was working at the Palestinian embassy, on 25 October 1993 on charges of spying for the Israeli intelligence service Mosad. [passage omitted]

Spokesman Denies Handing Over Yasin

TA2802185595 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 28 Feb 95 p 2

[Report by Samir Hamtu]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza—Marwan Kanafani, President 'Arafat's official spokesman, has denied a report by the London-based AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT on the PLO's handing over 'Adnan Yasin to Israel.

Kanafani said that this report is unfounded and is part of a campaign against the PLO and the National Authority [NA] to which we have become accustomed in such newspapers.

Kanafani added that the PLO and the NA are clear in their conduct and do not need to hide their actions.

PECDAR, Donor Countries End Meetings

JN2802170995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The fourth meeting of the local committee for coordinating aid to the Palestinian Authority [PA] ended at the Ministry of Economy in Jericho at noon today. Ahmad Quray', Abu 'Ala', PA minister of trade and economy; Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation; Terri Larsen, the UN secretary general's representative in the Palestinian territories; (Odine Kanoras), head of the World Bank delegation; and the donor countries representatives attended the meeting.

Further details on the results of the meeting in the following interview colleague Ahmad Zaki held with Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, director of the finance policies department in the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction [PECDAR]:

[Begin recording] [Zaki] Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, director of PECDAR economic [as heard] policies department, good evening.

['Abdallah] Good evening to you.

[Zaki] A meeting was held in Jericho today among a Palestinian delegation led by Ahmad Quray', a PECDAR delegation, the UN secretary general's representative, and the head of the World Bank delegation. What took place at the meeting?

['Abdallah] This is the fourth meeting of the local coordination committee of the donor countries. No less than 30 representatives of donor countries attended the meeting beside those you have mentioned. As I said, this is the fourth meeting and its purpose is to follow up on the coordination of foreign aid and development efforts, and the flow of aid to the Palestinian economy. At this meeting, Economy and Trade Minister Abu 'Ala' presented a detailed study on the difficulties the Palestinian economy is encountering at this stage. He emphasized the issue of current expenditures and the lack of funds in the (John Halls) fund which finances current expenditures. There is no more than $5,000 in the fund. This means that the PA will not be able to fulfill its obligations for the next month if the donor countries do not disburse what they had pledged to this fund. It is known that more than $35 million should have been paid to this fund, and these sums, as yet, have not been settled.

[Zaki] Dr. Samir, what is the deficit in the PA's balance of payments?

['Abdallah] The PA's budget deficit is, naturally, sizable. It may reach more than $30 million a month in this stage. Of course, this deficit will be gradually reduced when the PA's tax collection efficiency improves and when the PA succeeds in obtaining its rights from Israel through the clearing of taxes. Everyone knows that Israel procrastinates in settling its payments to the PA. In any case, this deficit, as I said, is decreasing. It is difficult to estimate it because tax collection has to do with economic activities. The closure has greatly harmed economic activities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This will reflect on our assessments of the volume of local revenues, or on the revenue from taxes.

[Zaki] Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, director of the PECDAR's economic policies department, thank you. [end recording]

Court To Try Collaborators; Hamas Urges Executions

TA0103090695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Imad al-Faluji, one of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders in the Gaza Strip, has urged the Palestinian Authority [PA] to execute the 17 collaborators it intends to put on trial in the special court Yasir 'Arafat recently established. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Begin Ben-Menahem recording] The special court for state security set up by Yasir 'Arafat has started working. After Israeli, international, and Palestinian public opinion got the impression that the court, whose judges are senior members of the Palestinian police, will deal with the Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists, PA Justice Minister Furayh Abu-Middayn announced last night that next month, the court will try 17 people who collaborated with Israel. He said that they admitted to killing Islamic Jihad activist Hani 'Abid and six members of the Fatah Hawks in the Jabalyah refugee camp a year ago.

PA Secretary 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Tayyib said that the special court was founded on the basis of Egyptian law, which prevails in the Gaza Strip, and that anyone violating the security of the state—that is, collaborators, arm dealers, and people who sell spoiled food—will be tried there.

Hamas was not really touched by the PA move. 'Imad al-Faluji, a Hamas leader, has said that Hamas' stand regarding the court has not changed. The court was designed to fight political opposition in the Gaza Strip in a fashion similar to other Arab regimes. As for the collaborators who took part in the killings, al-Faluji said: Why should they be put on trial at all? They were dealt with perfectly by the intifadah. A collaborator who sold out his homeland and faith to the enemy and committed murder should be executed, al-Faluji said.

Two weeks ago, the state security court tried a Hamas activist who is an Islamic University professor charged with incitement. He was found not guilty and sent home. [end recording]

Hamas Condemns Naval Blockade, U.S. 'Silence'

TA2802175295 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 28 Feb 95 p 7

[Report by 'Tahir al-Nunu]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, AL-NAHAR Documentation and Media Office—Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has strongly condemned the attacks by the Israeli Navy in South Lebanon and considers them to be a form of political, economic, and military terrorism. Hamas criticized U.S. and international silence toward these illegal measures, noting that this reflects the concept of a settlement by the U.S. Administration. This concept stipulates the need for the Arab parties to submit to the Israeli will and demands at the expense of the rights of these parties and the will and aspirations of their peoples.

In a statement distributed yesterday, Hamas labeled the continuation of this naval blockade against Lebanese ports in Sidon, Tyre, and Damur and the extension of its range to ports that are used by Lebanese fishermen, as well as their prevention from reaching the sea for a distance of more than 1 km along a 70 km shoreline, as an attempt to intensify pressure on Lebanon in a bid to force it to disband the Lebanese Resistance against the occupation in South Lebanon. These measures also seek to undermine the coordination between Syrian and Lebanese positions on the question of dealing with the settlement that the Israeli Administration is trying to impose. This settlement includes humiliating conditions that reject legitimate Arab rights.

Hamas Denies Participation in New Opposition Grouping

TA2802164695 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 28 Feb 95 p 19

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS—An official Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman has stressed the movement's nonparticipation in an opposition Palestinian grouping that was proclaimed recently in the occupied Arab territories and is led by former Nabulus Mayor Bassam al-Shak'ah.

Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah told QUDS PRESS: "We have not received any proposal to participate in this grouping, to express our views on it, or to make a decision on whether to participate in it." He added: "The formula of the Alliance of Palestinian Forces, formed about 18 months ago by 10 opposition factions, is an adequate opposition framework, despite its inactivity."

Ghawshah attributed this inactivity to the fact that some of the forces participating in the alliance have not acted against the peace process inside or outside the occupied territories. He added that some of the forces have stopped their armed operations against the Israeli occupation inside the Palestinian territories, despite the existence of such a possibility.

Broadcast Supports Newly Established Palestinian Group

JN2702194495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Palestine Broadcast: "Talk of the Return" by 'Abd-al-Rahman Ghunaym]

[FBIS Translated Text] Struggler Bassam al-Shak'ah, secretary of the Palestinian National Grouping [PNG] [al-tajammu' al-watani al-filastini], has said that the PNG includes Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], the [Islamic] Jihad Movement, the Popular Front [for the Liberation of Palestine], the Democratic Front [for the Liberation of Palestine], and independent Palestinian national personalities inside and outside the occupied territories.

In addition, the Palestinian popular organizations and trade unions inside and outside the occupied territories support, and participate in, this new grouping. This is the widest national alliance opposed to the Oslo agreement and its appendixes. Moreover, this alliance continues to wage the intifadah and launch resistance operations.

The PNG also adheres to the Palestinian people's basic and inalienable rights, including the demand for Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied in 1967 and the establishment of an independent Palestinian national state on the Palestinian national soil, as well as securing the right to repatriation and self-determination for all Palestinian refugees in the diaspora, who total several million. These are the objectives around which the will of the Palestinian national forces and their wide masses rally. Everyday, these masses emphasize their rejection of the Oslo agreement.

In fact, with the establishment of the leadership of the new PNG it is hard for the PLO leadership to even gather the majority of the PLO Executive Committee members. This means that this committee no longer exists, and that our people's masses in the occupied homeland are now rallying around the PNG leadership, which was recently announced in the occupied homeland. Brother struggler Bassam al- Shak'ah, former mayor of Nabulus, is in charge of the PNG's General Secretariat.

Algeria

Riot Witnesses Interviewed; Boudiaf's Assassin Shown

LD0103013595

[FBIS Editorial Report] Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic at 2140 GMT on 28 February broadcasts a report on statements by guards, inmates, and other eyewitnesses to the Serkadji prison riot on 21 February.

The witnesses are divided into two categories. The first, guards and common law inmates, give their statements in anonymity; their faces are blacked out on the screen. The second category, prisoners convicted of crimes against the state, are not accorded any anonymity; they state their names and their faces are shown on the screen.

The announcer says: "The initial information obtained by the investigation, which started soon after the incident, has implicated this youth whose main job was to guard the prison." A man is shown laying in a hospital bed. The announcer continues: "However, those who witnessed the incident have categorically implicated him—he was the one who smuggled in the four revolvers and the two grenades that were used in the mutiny, in addition to bringing other weapons into the prison."

An unidentified correspondent then questions the man shown in the hospital bed, who says his name is Hamid Ebarki, aged 25. He says he was a guard at Serkadji prison and he "was working when the incident took place."

After this, the television shows a guard, whose face is blackened out on the screen, who was an eye-witness to the events that took place at Serkadji high-security prison. He gives his account on how the mutiny began and how he was taken hostage along with one of his colleagues. He says he was in charge of guarding Lembarek Boumaarafi, the man suspected of killing President Boudiaf. He then talks about how the mutineers decided who should be killed next—Russian roulette style.

Afterwards, the television shows statements made by guards, common law inmates, and prisoners indicted under the emergency laws with crimes against the state. All statements shown corroborate a statement made by the Algiers public prosecutor in which he said that mutineers used violence against guards and inmates, used other inmates as human shields, opened fire on inmates when the latter tried to give themselves up, and that the mutineers were ready to die as long as they could take others with them.

The announcer says: "Reports have claimed that President Boudiaf's suspected murderer was killed during the storming of the prison. The truth is quite different, however. The following is the proof." The television shows a man who says:

"My name is Lembarek Boumaarafi; I have been convicted for the assassination of the chairman of the Higher State Council, Mohamed Boudiaf. I was imprisoned at Serkadji prison when the riot took place on that Tuesday and the prisoners rioted. I found myself in the middle of the mutiny. However, following the security forces's storming of the prison, a number of people were killed, some were wounded and others were freed. I was among the latter. However, I was slightly injured. But it is serious. That is it. I have nothing else to say."

An unidentified correspondent then asks: "You are Lembarek Boumaarafi, are you not?"

Boumaarafi responds: "Yes, I am Lembarek Boumaarafi."

The correspondent asks: "So you are still alive then?"

Boumaarafi responds: "Yes, you wanted to make sure that I am still alive. Here I am. I came alive from the riot."

The correspondent asks: "How did you get out of your cell? Did other inmates open your cell door?"

Boumaarafi responds: "Yes, that's right. It was after they took over the prison; they came up to my cell, which was situated in a high- security wing, and opened the door for me. That is how I got out."

The correspondent asks: "You had guards with you, did you not?"

Boumaarafi responds: "Yes, I had guards with me."

The correspondent asks: "What happened to your guards?"

Boumaarafi responds: "I do not know their fate."

The correspondent asks: "After you left your cell what happened to the guards; were they taken away?"

Boumaarafi responds: "Yes, I heard that they were killed. But I am not quite sure. I stayed with the rest of the prisoners inside. I was wounded before I was freed."

The program also shows clips from inside the prison following its storming by the security services, and images of a number of people who were killed. Some were graphic, showing the fatal wounds suffered by the victims.

Chief Prosecutor Interviewed on Riot

LD0103091095 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 2140 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] There was an escape attempt by the prisoners of the Serkadji prison at dawn on Tuesday, 21 February. It was followed by a mutiny and destruction of several rooms and cells in the prison. The mutiny began with the killing of four guards. They had their throats cut after being tortured by the prisoners who organized the escape attempt. The failed mutiny left, as you see, ruins, destruction, and the killing of several prisoners. It was a wave of violence in the prison with just one justification: Trying to shake the security of the institution and the safety of rest of the Serkadji prisoners. Here are the details with the chief prosecutor of the Algiers Judicial Council [not further identified]:

[Begin chief prosecutor recording] There was an escape attempt at dawn on Tuesday 21 February, and thanks to the vigilance of the prison guards, the attempt was foiled and the security forces moved in to surround the Serkadji re-education center. A crisis cell was set up immediately under the chairmanship of the minister of justice.

After the first enquiries, it transpired that the prisoners who had organized the failed escape attempt had cut the throats of four prison guards after torturing them. At 1000 a.m, Abdelkader Hachani and Abdelhak Layada [two Islamic Salvation Front leaders in jail] went to the door of the preventive jail and confirmed that four prison guards were assassinated and that some prisoners were in possession of firearms. The crisis cell gave them instructions to convey to the insurgent prisoners asking them to return to their cells or rooms and stay calm. This was done more than twice. At about 1630 p.m, we learned that the insurgent prisoners had brought downstairs other common law prisoners, including former civil servants, foreigners, and others. The crisis cell also learned that the mutineers had opened the cell of Lembarek Boumaarafi, accused in the case of the assassination of the late President Mohamed Boudiaf, and made him join the insurgent prisoners.

Fearing for them and the rest of the inmates, the crisis cell decided to allow the security forces to storm the prison to restore security to the institution and protect the rest of the inmates, who had nothing to do with this case, from any harm.

It was the responsibility of the state to protect and ensure the safety and security of the prison and its inmates according to the law.

Calls were made through loudspeakers asking that they remain in their places. When the security forces entered, many of the inmates, who number over 800, had returned to the rooms. Some of them, however, refused to comply and persisted in facing up to the intervention force.

Following numerous attempts, some of the rebellious inmates surrendered, and some others continued their confrontation and held some other inmates as hostages to use them as human shields, in addition to defendant Boumaarafi Lembarek [as heard]. It was noticed then that the rebels were showing fierce resistance and that they were determined to die.

Concerning the hostages, some of whom were freed by the security forces, some died, and some were injured, in addition to freeing the accused Lembarek Boumaarafi, who emerged safe, with slight wounds to his leg.

Initial investigations revealed that the escape attempt was planned by some prisoners who were sentenced to death, life imprisonment, and imprisonment, and some prisoners who previously participated in the failed escape attempt that took place at Berrouaghia prison on 28 November 1994, alongside some prisoners who were transferred from El-Harrach prison after their plan to escape from El-Harrach prison over three months ago was discovered. Those planned to escape from Sirkadji prison, regrettably, in connivance with one of the guards who brought in weapons.

It is noted that the prison institution has suffered material losses to the doors of the halls and cells, and to some other utilities, e.g. the surgery and library.

The prosecution has opened a judicial investigation into this case to shed light on finding the truth, and God willing, the honorable citizens will be informed of the secrets of this conspiracy. [end recording]

Armed Group Occupies, Damages Naciria Over Weekend

LD2802162795 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria the town of Naciria, about 100 km east of Algiers, was reportedly occupied during the night of Saturday to Sunday [25 to 26 February] by an armed group which looted a supermarket, set a secondary school on fire, and blew up a factory and an electricity transformer. At any rate, that is what EL WATAN reports today. It says that the armed group left in the center of the town the severed head of the chairman of an association of the unemployed who had been kidnapped a few days earlier.

'Amnesty' Asks Armed Groups To End Murders

LD2802184795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amnesty International strongly condemned the barbaric and continuous murders committed by the armed Islamic groups against civilians. The Organization sent a statement to ALGIERS APS yesterday, in which it called on the armed Islamic groups to stop their crimes, while asking political leaders of these groups to intervene, rather than justify, these crimes. The organization said these practices could not be justified in any way.

Security Services Report 16 'Criminals' Killed

LD2802185295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement of the security services said today that sixteen criminals were killed during the past two days by the security forces. A variety of weapons and ammunition were also recovered. The security forces carried out various operations in Chlef, Constantine, Algiers, Relizane, and Mostaganem.

Prime Minister, Finance Minister Meet IMF Group

LD0103101295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0700 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An International Monetary Fund [IMF] delegation, now on a visit to our country, was received last night by Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi. The meeting, which was attended by Finance Minister Ahmed Benbitour and Mohamed Karamane, governor of the Bank of Algeria, discussed the Algerian economic program and the need for IMF support.

Last night, Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi received at Djenane El-Mithak an IMF delegation headed by M. Paul Chabrier, director of the Middle East department, according to a statement by the prime minister's office.

The meeting comes in the wake of talks that took place on 16 and 26 February in Geneva on the Algerian economic program, which needs to be supported by an agreement every three years to facilitate extended IMF financial support.

The statement added that the two sides expressed satisfaction with the good conditions under which the talks took place and the results that were achieved. This tends to develop and deepen the cooperation between Algeria and international financial institutions, including the IMF and the International Bank and the assistance of these institutions for Algeria.

M. Chabrier, on behalf of the IMF, said he was satisfied with the proper implementation of the stand by loan and the positive results in line with the criteria which led to success, contained in this program.

He also expressed the satisfaction of the delegation of experts who recently in Geneva discussed the draft three-year program, which will be supported by the IMF.

M. Chabrier confirmed his readiness and the intention of his organization to complete this aid to Algeria.

Finance Minister Ahmed Benbitour, after attending the meeting between the prime minister and the IMF delegation last night, said the visit of the delegation came as a result of the negotiations between the Algerian Government and the IMF on the Algerian economic program, which he said would be the basis of a three-year agreement. The agreement is aimed at reducing inflation and preparing the structure for the private and public sectors. It takes into consideration the deprived social groups. It is a good program for overcoming the economic crisis. He added that this program was a model for the success of any program and also for transition from a planned economy to a market economy.

Maghreb-European Gas Pipeline Work 'on Schedule'

LD2802181295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] By the end of next April the extending work will be completed of the gas pipeline linking Algeria with Italy and Slovenia via Tunisia, according to Malik Bellani, deputy general manager of SONATRACH in charge of hydrocarbons transport. As for the section linking Hassi Remel, Spain, and Portugal, via Morocco, work is on schedule, said the same official to the Arab Oil and Gas magazine due to be published tomorrow. This Maghreban- European gas pipeline will be operational in June 1996 as planned.

Egypt

Musa Views Peace Process, NATO Dialogue, Somalia

NC2802142095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1145 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's forthcoming tour of the region will focus on the region's peace process and signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT].

After President Mubarak's meeting with the Ugandan foreign and trade ministers at the Presidential Office this morning, Musa told reporters that there are ongoing contacts to deal with the current crisis in the peace process, the Palestinian side's sense of frustration, and the dangers besetting the peace process.

Musa denied reports on partial cut in U.S. aid to Egypt. Musa commented on Egypt's participation in the current dialogue between NATO and five Mediterranean states and its goal. He said the issue is that a new idea is emerging in the NATO circles to deal with the new world conditions and changes now that the East-West confrontation has ended.

He added that currently there is a trend within NATO toward opening up to the Mediterranean but it has not been finalized. Therefore, he noted that a proposal was made for dialogue between NATO and a number of Mediterranean countries, including five states currently taking part. There are other countries waiting to take part in the dialogue to define the type and goal of the NATO- Mediterranean relationship.

Musa clarified that the NATO-Mediterranean relations issue has been put forth for many years now. What is new in the issue, he said, is that they want to discuss this with countries not members of NATO. He added: Dialogue means that we will listen to their views as they will listen to ours on how the NATO-Mediterranean relationship should be.

Musa said: We do not view this issue from the old perspective, which meant that NATO was in confrontation with the Warsaw Pact. The NATO organization had a role in Bosnia and when the United Nations wanted to carry out certain measures against the Serbs in Bosnia, the United Nations resorted to NATO, which means that NATO has a new role.

He said: We do not refuse dialogue with NATO because nothing prevents us from doing so. NATO is an active and effective international institution and Egypt, as a major state in the Mediterranean, will not refuse a dialogue with a major organization, such as NATO, We have actually entered the dialogue.

The foreign minister said NATO Secretary General Willy Claes has confirmed that the statement citing him as saying that NATO is looking for new members was misreported and misinterpreted.

Musa said: This is important because we do not prevent anyone from talking but ask him what he talked about to clarify things.

Musa remarked that Willy Claes had spoken of extremism as one of the dangers. He added: And when we speak with them we specify the dangers that confront us and tell them of our priorities in this regard.

The foreign minister added: We are not discussing military issues here. The affair at hand lies in a political, not military, context and differs from one country to another.

Musa pointed out that a NATO presence in the Mediterranean region is nothing new because this organization has always had bases in the southern Mediterranean.

Concerning events in Somalia, 'Amr Musa said he regrets the fresh eruption of hostilities among the warring factions and noted that it shows that they have not learned from past lessons, lack a national outlook on matters, and place their personal interests above the public interest.

He added that if the conflict continues in this manner, no one will be able to save Somalia.

'Amr Musa urged the leaders of the various Somali factions to take the country's rights into account and fear God because what they are doing now means the total destruction of Somalia.

He pointed out that the Somali factions should have seized the opportunity of the presence of the UN forces and the stability that this presence had provided. He remarked that the return of the civil war will restore general chaos to the country and as a result one party will triumph over the other. He declared: This is not the Somalia that the Africans and the Arabs want. A Somalia in such circumstances is damaging to the African continent, the Islamic religion, the Islamic world, the Arabs, and indeed damaging to Somali interests.

'Amr Musa added: We will discuss this issue in an African and pan-Arab context. The return of UN peacekeeping forces to Somalia is not currently feasible and at any rate a decision to do so falls within the Security Council's jurisdiction.

Musa regretted the fact that there is no possibility that the African crisis management apparatus can help resolve the Somali crisis peacefully because it cannot carry out a role that the UN Security Council has failed to perform.

He expressed hope, however, that this apparatus will discuss the Somali question during its next meeting on 7 March.

Regarding the African ministerial meeting due to convene in Cairo in late March, Musa said that it will discuss one issue only, namely social and economic conditions in Africa. He said that he had made a suggestion about this during the recent OAU summit in Tunisia.

Musa continued: I noted that we always discuss political and economic matters and have not yet discussed social conditions in Africa. I said that we must now do so because there is a social breakdown as serious as the economic decline on the continent. He pointed out that the summit unanimously approved the proposal to discuss this issue and extended invitations for a foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo on 28 March.

Editor Criticizes Israel, U.S. on NPT

NC0103114395 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 25 Feb 95 pp 5-6

[Article by Chief Editor Makram Muhammad Ahmad: "What Will the Arabs Do?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A few days ago President Mubarak cautioned the Israeli leaders against trying to create an unsubstantiated crisis with Egypt, which would not benefit Israel, the peace efforts, or the establishment of sound Arab-Israeli relations that could open the Middle East door to a more secure, cooperative, and new future.

President Mubarak was responding to fresh Israeli campaigns targeting Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa personally, campaigns that really meant to weaken Egypt's clear-cut position on the issue of nuclear nonproliferation in the Middle East. As usual President Mubarak chose to respond with calm words and without overreacting. But his remarks sent a clear message to the Israelis, namely, that the campaigns of extortion and terror will not scare Egypt or make it change its mind. This is because the Egyptian-Israeli disagreement is a genuine and legitimate one resulting from Israel's intransigent and inflexible stance, not from the hostility that the Egyptian foreign minister harbors toward Israel, as some Israeli officials wrongly claim in a bid to scare off the Egyptian minister.

It was not Egypt that created the crisis of disagreement with Israel over signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. On the contrary, it would have been sufficient for Egypt had Israel taken a single serious step in this connection, prompting Egypt to take a few steps in the same direction. But Israel's insistence on monopoly and hegemony has turned the disagreement into a crisis that could escalate further. Egypt tried, and is still trying, in its negotiations with Israel, to find an acceptable formula that could achieve a kind of equitable security for all the parties. But Israel so far refuses to make a commitment to join the Treaty in the near future, according to a well-defined timetable the terms of which could be negotiated. All that Israel is willing to concede is a frail, extremely ambiguous, and extremely generalized formula stipulating the "possible consideration of signing the Treaty after a comprehensive peace among all the Middle East countries, including Iran and Iraq, has been reached and after an integrated system for reducing and controlling regional weapons is set up." Could there be sound regional relations that guarantee a degree of equitable security for all the Middle East parties under such a frail formula, according to which Israel promises only to possibly consider signing the Treaty—not sign it—on an unspecified date that is impossible to set? If so, when will the examination of the issue, an examination that will start God knows when, end? And when will the signing take place? Why this farce that shows unacceptable contempt for the interests of others?

Israel's excuse about the existence of a potential nuclear threat against it from Iraq and Iran is a silly joke that is hard to swallow. This is because the international monitoring and inspection guarantees and controls stipulated under the Treaty provide an opportunity for full, accurate, and constant inspection of all nuclear installations. I presume that the precedent set by Iraq and events there make it almost impossible for the tragedy to recur. Manufacturing a nuclear weapon behind the backs of the major states and their information gathering agencies is virtually impossible unless there is collusion, as was the case between Israel and the United States in 1969, when President Nixon agreed to let Israel maintain its secrecy over its nuclear program and held the United States back from putting on any pressure to compel Israel to sign the Treaty. Unfortunately, the U.S. commitment remains.

It would have been justified for this commitment to remain in an atmosphere of international polarization, with its repercussions for the Middle East, in the absence of chances for a comprehensive peace straightening out Arab-Israeli relations, and in the absence of opportunities enabling Israel to become a Middle Eastern country with regional ties of cooperation with the region's countries and peoples. What is unjustifiable is for this commitment to have lasted so long and for Israel to have maintained its obstinate stance, refusing to take a single step toward a reasonable solution acceptable to all the parties. The United States wants an indefinite extension of the Treaty, which would consecrate Israel's hegemony and superiority indefinitely, without the slightest regard for the others' security and rights to a just peace with equitable terms and duties.

It was strange for Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres at the end of his talks in Washington last week to announce that Israel would not sign the Treaty and that the United States did not ask it to, when U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher already told Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa in their meeting that signing the Treaty is of important strategic interest for the United States! There are whispers in the corridors of some pressure groups that aid could be used as a form of pressure against Egypt to accept the extension of the Treaty without waiting for Israel's stance.

Where is the strategic interest for Egyptian and Arab security? Why would it not be in the United States' interest for Israel to sign the Treaty like the others? Is Israel's refusal to sign the Treaty compatible with its pressing demand to urgently normalize its ties with the Arab world? Is Israel's refusal also in line with its other demand to open the door wide to regional cooperation even before the Middle East peace plan is complete?

Both demands are supported by the United States. But regrettably we hear no satisfying response to any of these questions that prompt the Arab world's concern, as if the Arabs have no public opinion that knows, questions, and scrutinizes things, a public whose doubts are mounting by the day over the credibility of the U.S. stance.

The Americans are mistaken if the vanity of power makes some pressure groups believe in the possibility of using aid as a weapon to pressure Egypt into accepting a situation compromising its dignity, national security, and pan-Arab interests.

The Americans are very mistaken if they disregard the immense national consensus unifying the positions of all Egyptians behind a clear policy. These positions demand justice and equal security so that the region will not enter a nuclear arms race compounding its tragic circumstances. They demand uniform standards so that the Treaty will gain international credibility, something it lacks in light of the flagrant bias in Israel's favor. They also demand equal rights to preserve the country's dignity and interests.

Perhaps what is most regrettable is that the United States does not yet realize the magnitude of damage to its image in the Arab world as it becomes again the biased, ugly face that shows double standards and transgresses Arab rights. This ugly face shirks its responsibility for rectifying the peace process and gives Israel the opportunity to pursue its stubbornness without a distinct justifiable reason. It also exercises mounting pressure on Arab countries to make them sign the Treaty. This is despite nearly 30 other countries having their own various reasons not to sign the Treaty, including Mexico, the United States' neighbor and economic ally, Nigeria, and Indonesia.

These countries, out of concern for the world's security and peace, have rejected the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the grounds that its indefinite extension means perpetuating the privileges of the five nuclear states that refrain from adopting serious measures to scale down their nuclear capabilities. Besides, other countries that have signed the Treaty have achieved no benefits although the Treaty's articles provide for helping the signatory states to develop their peaceful use of nuclear energy to serve development projects.

Every expectation regrettably indicates that the United States will exercise increasing pressure on Arab countries so that the quorum will be complete for extending the Treaty indefinitely and there will be no unified Arab stance on any of the fateful issues concerning the Middle East's future. The reason is that a unified Arab stance even in support of peace will not appease the Israelis, who have control over most of the U.S. decisions concerning the Middle East.

The Israelis' ultimate and permanent goal is to continue Arab discord, preventing them from adopting any unified stance, out of the Israelis' deep feeling that any Arab harmony will necessarily compromise their plans to control the Middle East's fate.

Prompted by this deep-seated feeling, the Israelis are still attacking the Alexandria summit toward which they were hostile even before it convened or released its final communique. The reason is that the mere convocation of the summit indicated the possibility of restoring solidarity and joint Arab action.

If it is true that one of the current Israeli campaign's goals is to besiege the Egyptian stance on nuclear arms proliferation. The other goal, which is no less important or clear, is the attempt to abort any Arab effort aimed at coordinated joint Arab action, especially on this issue. The reason is that the Arabs' success on this issue means the possibility of achieving other successes rectifying the Middle East peace path.

Paper Praises U.S. Initiative Toward Middle East

NC2702090695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0700 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AHRAM has described the intended tour of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher of the Middle East region as the last chance tour, "particularly since it is no longer a secret to anyone that hopes for rescuing the peace process have been shattered."

In a commentary today, the newspaper said that the official statement by the U.S. State Department on Christopher's tour constitutes a positive development in the United States' analysis of the roots of the crisis. The statement pointed out that the Palestinian-Israeli agreements, over whose implementation disagreement broke out during the current crisis of the peace efforts, are based on an elementary equation: Providing security for the Israelis in return for giving the Palestinians economic and political authority, coupled with fixing the date for the beginning of the final stage for settling the question of Palestine.

The newspaper regarded the reading of the crisis by the United States as a positive development "because previously the U.S. position had been biased toward the Israeli explanation of the reasons for the crisis." The paper said that the U.S. assessment of the roots of the crisis is formulated in an equation. This means that the Palestinian right to acquire political and economic power and to set the date for the final stage of negotiations corresponds to the Israeli right to security.

The newspaper praised this trend which "places the Israeli sense of security and Palestinian right to implement the autonomy agreements on an equal footing and in the same formula."

The newspaper called on Christopher not to give priority to Israel's security needs over the political and economic needs of the Palestinians.

Official Assails U.S. Human Rights Report

NC2802185995 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 25 Feb 95 p 28

[Report on interview with Ambassador Muhammad 'Adil al-Safti, assistant foreign minister for international cooperation and multinational relations, by Hamdi Rizq; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-MUSAWWAR has learned that the United States, represented by the U.S. Embassy's political counselor, has promised the Egyptian Foreign Ministry to revise a two-week-old U.S. report on human rights in Egypt in light of observations and clarifications made by Egypt on three basic points. According to informed sources at the Foreign Ministry, Egypt made some sharp criticisms of the sources on which the U.S. report relied. Egypt described these sources as not unbiased, serving special interests, and possessing faulty and tendentious information. Also, the U.S. report greatly exaggerated the actions that it attributed to the government while downplaying the actions attributed to the terrorists.

The Foreign Ministry sources asserted that the U.S. report devoted one and a half lines to the attack on [noted author] Najib Mahfuz but a third of a page to the case of 'Abd-al-Harith Madani [lawyer who died while in police custody]. They said that this proves that the report lacks objectivity and adopts the extremist point of view while disregarding the Egyptian Government's views. The Foreign Ministry emphasized that it finds the report's description of clearly terrorist operations as civil disobedience unacceptable. The ministry noted that the U.S. report mentioned that 286 terrorists were killed in the first nine months of 1994 but downplayed the fact that the terrorists killed 101 policemen in a period of only three months, devoting only six words to this latter point but assigning a whole paragraph to a complaint by a narcotics dealer called Fath-al-Bab 'Abd-al-Mun'im claiming that he was tortured at a police station.

The Foreign Ministry pointed out that the U.S. report included cases that had already been mentioned in the 1993 report such as the case of Mansur al-Khiya, the Libyan official who went missing and has not yet been found.

Ambassador Muhammad 'Adil al-Safti, assistant foreign minister for international cooperation and multinational relations, made exclusive remarks to AL-MUSAWWAR in which he noted that his meeting with the U.S. Embassy's political counselor lasted for one and a half hours and that he conveyed to him the ministry's observations on the issue.

Al-Safti added: I cannot describe this meeting as enjoyable. I pointed out that it is necessary for the United States to take into account the response made by the Egyptian Foreign Ministry before publishing its own report. The United States promised to do that in the future. I can state that where Egypt is concerned the U.S. report was neither just nor fair.

Concerning the sources from which the U.S. report obtained its information, al-Safti said: Most of the information was drawn from the Egyptian Human Rights Organization [EHRO] and what have come to be described as local observers. These latter individuals are unknown. It is noteworthy that in referring to an incident that took place on a bridge in Upper Egypt, the report cites local human rights observers, as if those observers just happened to be standing on that particular bridge or had set up their headquarters on it.

[Rizq] If the EHRO is behind all this information, why don't you respond to its reports?

[Al-Safti] I would like to say something important about this organization. First of all, it is an illegal organization and cannot operate legally. It applied for registration with the Ministry of Social Affairs in line with Law No. 32 of 1964. The ministry found, however, that the organization lacked many objective criteria to be able to operate publicly and refused to register it. The EHRO took the issue to court and the case is still pending. Nevertheless, the organization continued to operate despite its lack of legality. Hence, any reports made by it are illegal and unaccredited by us.

[Rizq] They do, however, send their reports and ask for a response. They have not stopped publishing inside the country and abroad.

[Al-Safti] They send some, but not all, of their reports to us informally. You see, our fax number is publicly known and the EHRO uses it to contact us although we consider its existence and its reports illegal. Strangely enough, we do not receive all the reports. We do not see the EHRO reports that are published abroad and used by other organizations to attack Egypt until we are surprised by finding them published abroad on the EHRO's own responsibility.

[Rizq] Putting aside the question of the EHRO's legal or illegal character, what do you think of the reports themselves that EHRO prepares?

[Al-Safti] They are greatly exaggerated and tackle issues only from one angle. The viewpoint presented by these reports is adopted in advance. The reports serve only to promote this viewpoint.

[Rizq] Do you mean that certain local groups use the organization's reports?

[Al-Safti] This is largely true. With the media and propaganda activity they are known for, terrorist groups view these organizations and reports as major sources. I do not think that the existing organizations have the necessary means to verify the information they obtain. Accordingly, their information is questioned basically.

[Rizq] Are they helped in that by human rights bureaus?

[Al-Safti] They are all illegal establishments and associations. They must be registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs so that they can be recognized as nongovernmental organizations. Operating under the name of civilian nonprofit societies is an obvious violation of the law that should be confronted. These organizations recently proliferated in an octopus-like manner all over the world. But not all proliferation is sound, particularly when it is unorganized. All such organizations aim to obtain financial and in-kind assistance.

[Rizq] Are these bureaus not entitled to compile information and write reports as long as embassies in Egypt do the same; and, what do you think of what the U.S. Embassy is doing and of its recent report?

[Al-Safti] The U.S. Embassy observes human rights, not in Egypt alone, but in all the countries of the world. The State Department has a legal commitment to the Congress to submit an annual report on human rights all over the world in late January or early February.

It might be one of the duties of the U.S. Embassy to observe human rights in Egypt. But they should rely on public sources available to all. Although the recent report relied on public sources, these sources were unfortunately not neutral and had suspicious objectives.

[Rizq] What about finances? There are reports that they are getting financed through the State Department and that there are protocols in this connection.

[Al-Safti] First of all, the protocols are not signed with the Egyptian Foreign Ministry but with other bodies. Whether they are with us or with that other body, some of these protocols, and not all, note assistance provided to nongovernmental and other bodies. These were mere references that were not stipulated in the text of the protocols. Some volunteer organizations used this to obtain financing. The Egyptian Government's attention was drawn to this to prevent a recurrence.

We do not object to foreign financing for nongovernmental organizations. Our only condition is making sure that these organizations are legal. I affirm that governments support legal organizations only.

[Rizq] Foreign financing might have special objectives. Have you recently sensed any attempt to stir these organizations in Egypt to harm it?

[Al-Safti] I do not believe that there is a conspiracy. However, I affirm that the Egyptian Government, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is being subjected to a lot of injustice. Whenever we respond to such reports, these associations fail to report our responses. One of these renowned organizations ignored the Egyptian response for three whole years with the excuse that their employee did not receive a copy of the response, although we sent the response one week before the due date after ratification from the authorities.

Moreover, some of the cases they request a response on are sometimes being considered by the judiciary. This is another difficulty we face. Foreign institutions should know the meaning of judicial independence.

[Rizq] In light of what you said, did the report and the Egyptian response result in any crisis in Egyptian-U.S. relations?

[Al-Safti] There is no crisis between Egypt and the United States concerning human rights. The United States prepared a report and we prepared our remarks and notified them. For those who try to show the matter as a crisis, I say that there is absolutely no crisis.

[Rizq] Do we run after these reports or is there a certain mechanism for responding?

[Al-Safti] For three years, the human rights administration at the Foreign Ministry has been working toward that goal. But overlooking its replies led to the present situation. We are trying to find a solution for the problem caused by overlooking the ministry's views and responses.

State Urged To Legitimize Human Rights Groups

NC2502155195 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 19 Feb 95 p 8

["Close Up" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "The Human Rights Problem"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Human rights associations in Egypt are facing a tough campaign of accusations that places them in the same category with commercial boutiques and suspect communications centers that work for foreign outfits. The campaign views everything these associations issue as the echo or reflection of reports some foreign and international organizations hostile to Egypt circulate only to tarnish the country's reputation or blow mistakes or incidents out of proportion. According to a senior official, some of these associations have turned into an instrument in the hand of terrorists because they talk of no rights other than terrorists' and defend no one but terrorists.

Such accusations are repeated every year whenever an international organization issues a statement or report on or criticizes the state of human rights in Egypt. These reports cause a nervous and furious uproar and trigger sharper reactions, taking out the anger on the Egyptian organizations and those running them without taking the trouble to answer the real or false criticism addressed to the Egyptian authorities.

We are not saying that the reports these international organizations publish are founded on correct information. We are saying that nervous reactions, accusing Egyptian citizens of agentry and treason, or accusing foreign quarters of harboring evil intentions and lying, are not enough to answer these claims or deny them. This will not block the flow of international reports that draw their information from sources who might not be above suspicion. These reactions are often used as an instrument of pressure or an excuse for interference.

The issue of human rights has become one of the most important global criteria that qualify a state's worthiness to join the world community. Therefore, states allowed the establishment of national associations that defend human rights. They granted them the legitimacy needed to exercise their activity under the state's eyes and without any intervention, so that they can make independent national decisions without having to rely on, seek the protection of, or solicit finances from foreign organizations.

This is what we need in Egypt. The state has taken a negative attitude toward human rights organizations, which expanded uncontrolled. It imposed tight restrictions on their proclamation and licensing. While becoming an existing reality, these organizations work in the dark, free from all legal and administrative disciplines. Rather than depending on self-financing and refraining from accepting conditional gifts or aid, these organizations began to seek foreign cover because of the state's hostile outlook on them.

International reports on human rights conditions in Egypt and other states will certainly not stop just because we issue an angry statement or a categorical denial. It is better to follow the example of civilized states and allow these organizations to work in the light and under a law that guarantees their integrity as much as it guarantees their independence.

Journalist: Extremists Help Anti-Islam Drive

NC2502175995 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 18 Feb 95 p 9

[Article by 'Abd-al-Sattar al-Tawilah: "It Is We Who Pave the Way for Islam's Enemies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] I was personally dismayed—and doubtlessly many others were also—by a BBC news item saying that the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI] had announced that the members of the Sudanese mission to the United Nations in New York had been placed on a list of suspects believed to have had a connection to the World Trade Center bombing. The Sudanese mission has 170 members.

The FBI statement did not accuse only the Sudanese UN mission but also included in the list of suspects Dr. Mahdi, chairman of the Islamic Council in New York. This man is known to all Muslim journalists as an eminently moderate individual. The FBI sent its list to the judge presiding over the trial of Dr.'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and his co-defendants.

As anyone with some intelligence can easily grasp, the FBI was signifying to the court that the defendants do not represent an independent terrorist gang but are backed by Arab Islamic governments, such as the Sudanese Government.

Earlier when the newest suspect in the trial, an Iraqi national, was arrested in Pakistan, some U.S. newspapers tried to accuse Iraq of involvement in the World Trade Center bombing. The accusation struck no chord and the newspapers fell silent, perhaps only temporarily.

Accusing five Islamic nations of participating in terrorist acts strengthens the claim that Islam is the danger that has replaced the defunct communist threat and, consequently, the West must prepare to confront this danger. We recall here the U.S. Congress' resolution, passed less than two years ago, that gave U.S. government organs the right to snare [tatasayyad] any terrorist elements in any country in the world, regardless of that country's sovereignty rights, and bring them to the United States to face trial.

We also recall the full invasion of Panama to arrest its president and take him to the United States to stand trial. Additionally, the United States tried to kill Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and his family in al-'Uzayziyah not merely by air bombardment but also with the help of groups of agents inside Tripoli itself.

All these are worrying signs. They make us worry that terrorist operations and the backing they get from some Islamic countries might cause endless calamities for the Arab-Islamic world, the extent of which we cannot now foresee.

Although I take a strongly hostile attitude to the current Sudanese regime, I doubt very much that it had a direct connection to the World Trade Center bombing.

However, we have discovered that the Sudanese Government is playing host to terrorist elements; helping them escape and infiltrate into Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt; supplying them with weapons; and encouraging them to terrorize peaceable people even in the fledgling Republic of Eritrea that needs a period of respite after decades of bloody war. It sets up training camps, called "farms," as [Mubarak's adviser] Dr. Usamah al-Baz told the newspaper AL-BALAGH AL-JADID. The Sudanese Government persists in this behavior regardless of the intervention of numerous Arab mediators.

Doubtlessly, this gives the government of any other country the opportunity to point the finger at the Sudanese Government as an active participant in terrorism.

More seriously, if such accusations are made, the Sudanese Government will not find one Arab government to defend it because the Arab countries themselves suffer from the terrorist actions backed by that government.

Should Sudan be isolated, no one would bother with what might happen to it, whether a blockade is imposed, international pressure is applied, or measures are taken against it such as those we have grown used to seeing the UN Security Council pass at the instigation of the United States, because such decisions would be unwarranted. If the issue has to do with a state that really exercises terrorism crimes, then support for acts of terror is a form of exercise and encouragement. Who knows whether or not the big powers will extend their umbrella to other innocent states that have nothing to do with terrorism. Our proof of this is the U.S. insistence that Libya hand over the two defendants in the Lockerbie plane crash and how the United States is besieging Libya despite all the concessions it made to get closer to the U.S. views and despite the mediation efforts by Arab countries that are friendly to the United States, such as Egypt.

Certain groups that falsely hold the banner of Islam and distort it help the big powers, particularly the United States, to take action against some countries. For instance, take what is currently happening in the worsening tragic-comedy in Afghanistan. A new group of the so-called Mujahidin attributes itself to the Afghan students. This fanatic and intransigent group marches on Kabul, destroying villages, killing people, and plundering their houses along the way, as correspondents reported. They are making the Afghan crisis more complicated and thousands more are being killed at the hands of these adventurers. Another example is what is happening in the occupied territories, where Israeli Prime Minister Rabin declares so simply that Israel arrested 1,000 Palestinians from the Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] and al-Jihad and that he is pressuring the self-government led by 'Arafat to put members of these groups on trial and not be content with their arrest. 'Arafat even went so far as to form a military tribunal.

All these actions divide the Arab and Islamic ranks and the party that is primarily responsible for this is the reckless, so-called extremist Islamic trends in the various parts of the Arab World. These groups pursue a childish and futile policy, using force against their own people and killing children, women, and ordinary defenseless soldiers.

Thus, we are giving our adversaries and the enemies of Islam weapons that destroy and undermine us and keep us on the margin of the international political theater where others decide our fates and control our wealth and future. Nevertheless, the future is not desperate. I call on the Arabs and Muslims to heed the most significant meaning of the Islamic and Christian religions. It is unity of all believers to solve their problems and confront any danger against them. The primary danger is within us: The extremists and their accomplices who are, at best, politically blind, that is, if they are not tools in the hands of the enemies of Islam or their willing or unwilling allies.

Suspects Claim 'Assassins' Trained at Qina, Luxor Camps

NC0103120795 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 25 Feb 95 p 9

[Report by 'Izzat Badawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Terrorists who were members of Qina Governorate's Organization-25 have made detailed confessions about the so-called military "confrontation" wing. The suspects have stated that their first target was Qina's security director but this plot was uncovered. They said that suspect Muhammad Fahmi was given the task of mounting a surveillance operation on the security director but the plan failed when Fahmi was arrested in connection with another terrorist operation. He was also told by other members of the military wing that carrying out the attack was difficult because of strict security measures inside the city of Qina.

Interrogated by Yasir al-Rifa'i, director of the State Security Prosecution Office, supervised by Public Attorney Hisham Saraya, Fahmi said he failed to carry out his plan to assassinate Qina's security director and the plan was then changed to assassinating his assistant, Major General 'Abd-al-Hamid Ghubarah. Terrorists 'Ala' 'Awwad and 'Abd-al-Nasir Muhammad followed Ghubarah's moves and assassinated him.

Terrorist Sa'id Mahmud al-'Allami told Chief Prosecutor Usamah Qandil that the military confrontation wing that carried out terrorist operations in Qina and Luxor had 25 members, including three youths who were recruited to carry out surveillance on the group's intended victims.

Other terrorist confessions, given to senior prosecutors 'Abd-al- Mun'im al-Halawani and Sharif 'Abd-al-Nabi, revealed that the organization used the eastern ridge, where the villages of the Qina and Luxor Districts are situated, as training headquarters. According to the confessions, three camps were established there to train terrorists in the use of weapons and how to carry out assassinations. Terrorist Ahmad Mahdi al-Tabarni assumed command of the camps and provided three hours of daily training to groups of assassins. The first camp was set up on the ridge overlooking the village of al-'Idiyat in Luxor District, the second was in the village of al-Tub in Luxor District, and the third was on a ridge in the al-Juraydat area [village names and area name as published].

The terrorists made detailed confessions on how they carried out their terrorist crimes, which cost the lives of Major General 'Abd- al-Hamid Ghubarah, Qina's assistant security director, and his guards and Brigadier General Mahmud Salih al-Dib, chief interrogating inspector at the Qina Security Directorate, and wounded al-Dib's driver and guards, Major Muhammad Abu-Nada of the State Security Detectives Force and his guards, and three citizens, two of them women. Many other innocent citizens were wounded during those attacks.

Public Prosecutor Raja' al-'Arabi this week ordered that the 18 suspects be referred to Cairo's Higher State Security Court—Emergency Section.

Two Defendants in al-Ghardaqah Events Executed

NC2702125595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—The death sentence was carried out today on two defendants in the al-Ghardaqah events case. The two defendants were Muhammad 'Atallah 'Umar and Rabi' Muhammad Mahmud Hasanayn.

A responsible source at the military judiciary has clarified that the military court passed the death sentence on the two defendants on 3 December 1994 after it found them guilty on charges of the premeditated murder of four people in the al-Dahhar Square in al-Ghardaqah—two Egyptians and two Germans—with the objective of dealing tourism a blow. Another citizen was also injured in the events.

The higher military court had handed down sentences of 15 years of hard labor to four defendants, among them two fugitives; 10 years of hard labor to seven defendants, among them three fugitives; seven years of hard labor to two defendants; and five years of hard labor to one defendant.

The prosecution charged the defendants with joining a group that was set up illegally with the objective of hampering the application of the constitution, collusion with criminal intent to commit murder, owning weapons and ammunition without licenses, and forging official documents.

The defendants submitted many pleas that the sentences issued against them be reviewed, but these pleas were rejected.

Prosecution Renews Remand for 3 MB Members

NC2802194095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1740 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Counselor Hisham Saraya, attorney general at the Supreme State Security Prosecution, today decided to renew the remand in custody of three defendants from the Muslim Brotherhood [MB] for another 15 days pending interrogation. The defendants are Rizq 'Abd-al-Rashid, Ibrahim al-Bayyumi, and Ahmad Muhammad Faraj 'Uthman.

The prosecution accused the defendants of joining an illegal organization that seeks to overthrow the regime through a series of meetings that discussed running the next legislative elections, participating in the teachers union elections, and raising the necessary finance for that purpose.

The prosecution will consider extending the remand of the remaining 24 defendants after 'Id al-Fitr.

Sudan's Plans To Hold Elections in Hala'ib Criticized

NC2702221195 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 21 Feb 95 p 2

[Editorial: The New Sudanese Escalation and the Hala'ib Electoral District]

[FBIS Translated Text] The "ASSOCIATED PRESS" reported from Khartoum last night that Sudan is preparing to hold elections in the Hala'ib area. The same agency described this action as a move to step up tension with Egypt.

The agency added that 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Zayn, chairman of the General Elections Committee in Sudan, told the daily Sudanese paper 'AKHBAR AL-YAWM' that the names of voters in Hala'ib have already been recorded in preparation for the elections that will be held and which usually take several months.

The agency also reported that Sudan is seeking to establish a political system similar to the Libyan one to succeed the current military regime of Lieutenant General 'Umar 'Abd-al-Bashir who led a coup that brought him to power in 1989.

The agency described the Hala'ib area as a desert triangle that lies on the Red Sea and which is part of the Egyptian territories according to the 1899 treaty but which Egypt has been conceding to Sudan administrative authority since early this century.

This accurate description by the agency of the real status of the Hala'ib area spares us any effort in asserting that this area is Egyptian. Hala'ib has been an Egyptian area since at least 1899 and no one at all can wrest it away from Egypt's territories. But what really concerns us is this new and unilateral Sudanese escalation on the Hala'ib issue. Sudan has no right to hold elections in that area. No Sudanese elections have ever been held in it.

The significance of announcing such a step at this particular time is no secret to anyone. The Sudanese regime, which is under the control of the Islamic Front led by Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, is facing a series of chronic crises in its relations with the Sudanese opposition, the deteriorating economic conditions under whose burden the Sudanese people are suffering, and the civil war in the south which has been raging for long years and which is now threatening to split the south from the north and establish an independent state for the southerners alone. The al-Bashir - al-Turabi regime is also facing tension in its relations with all its neighbors and from all directions, with Ethiopia, Uganda, Eritrea, Somalia, and Egypt too.

As part of the Sudanese regime's attempts to divert the people's attention from these crises, al-Bashir recently decided to hold general elections that will give this military, fascist regime a civilian facade, even if this necessitated the retirement of al- Bashir himself after these elections. The Sudanese regime also decided to widen the differences with Egypt, or more accurately, to stop all the goodwill efforts being made to heal the rift in the two countries' relations. Thus, a cabinet reshuffle was carried out on 9 February. The most important change was the dismissal of former Foreign Minister Dr. Hasan Sulayman Abu-Salih as punishment for his calm efforts to improve ties with Egypt. Al-Bashir appointed 'Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha as foreign minister. He is assisted in this by Dr. Ghazi Salah-al-Din al-Qabbani, the minister of state for foreign affairs. The first was planning minister and the second was minister for political affairs at the presidency. Both are from the hardline wing in the Islamic Front led by al-Turabi. This is the wing that is seeking to create crises with Egypt and other neighboring countries, disregarding everything other than the attempts to create a false leadership under the so-called Islamic fundamentalism or political Islam which usually leads its advocates into involvement in the quagmire of exporting terrorism and sponsoring it in the Arab and Islamic world. We are not guessing this or saying it under the influence of inferences that lack good sense. We are saying it on the basis of events that cannot be denied. The Sudanese regime's involvement in terrorism does not need any proof after international terrorist Carlos came out recently from the closet of the al-Bashir - al-Turabi regime which harbored and gave him shelter. Former Foreign Minister Husayn Abu- Salid was removed after coming under severe criticism from the Sudanese press in the past few months because of his inclination to calm the situation with Egypt and reach reconciliation with it over Hala'ib.

Hence, there is nothing odd in seeing the escalation with Egypt becoming the headlines again only 10 days after the minister's dismissal. This also explains why al-Bashir spoiled his meeting with President Mubarak at the recent Islamic summit in Casablanca before it took place, despite all the mediations made.

It is my view that Egypt and not Sudan should establish an electoral district in Hala'ib to be included in the al-Bahr al-Ahmar Governorate and to include it in the coming elections to the People's Assembly so that the Hala'ib representatives will become members in it. It is my information that there are Egyptian plans in this respect and we hope that they will be implemented as soon as possible. That Hala'ib is Egyptian is not a matter of courtesy. This is the successful way to confront this insolent Sudanese escalation with real calm and in a practical way.

No Effect From Barings Collapse on Banking System

NC2802210195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2035 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—Muhammad al- Barbari, deputy governor of the Egyptian Central Bank, has stated that the collapse of the British bank, Barings, will not affect the Egyptian banking system because the Egyptian Central Bank has no transactions with the collapsed bank.

Al-Barbari explained that the British bank is not one of the Egyptian Central Bank's correspondents. He pointed out that Barings is not a commercial bank in the understood sense but a bank which deals with stock exchanges and currency markets.

He added: Its collapse will not affect us because we have not invested any funds in it. [passage omitted]

Libya

JANA: Ex-U.S. Agent Fearful in New Lockerbie Case

LD2802194495 Tripoli JANA in English 1843 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, al-Nawwar [February] 28, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Lester Coleman, a former agent in the U.S defence intelligence agency, who is a star witness in a dramatic new legal action over the so-called Lockerbie case has announced that he is in fear of his life because of his devastating evidence which made him a marked man.

Lester Coleman who worked for the U.S. intelligance told [words indistinct] EXPRESS, published in London on 26 al-Nawwar [February] that the widely held view that Libya was responsible is a lie.

The former U.S. defence intelligence agency spy will reveal that the bombing of Pan Am 103 with the loss of 270 people was connected to a drug trafficking operation.

He says American agents were fully aware that security surrounding the flight had been breached. Mr, Coleman will lay the blame for the bombing on parties other than Libya when the Lockerbie families, led by Dr. Jim Swire, take their case to the European Commission next month.

He fears his evidence will so embarrass the U.S. and his former bosses want him dead.

Mr. Coleman says that when he was based in Cyprus, drug traffickers ran heroin into the U.S. via Nicosia, Frankfurt and London. America attempted to limit the drug supply by allowing "controlled" deliveries via Frankfurt.

He claims that the U.S. Embassy in Cyprus then received a warning in May 1988 of plans to plant explosives, but did nothing.

Seven months later, on Pan Am 103, a bag of the American "controlled" heroin was switched for a bomb. Mr. Swire, leader of the Lockerbie families campaign, said: "The official edifice is crumbling and Lester Coleman will be pivotal in showing the official line to be discredited in court.

"Stakes are high because if the alternative line is true the reputations of the American and British intelligence services, plus at least two American presidents and two British prime ministers will be wrecked."

Coleman is in hiding after fleeing America in 1990 when the FBI wanted him jailed for passport fraud.

The Scottish Office, Foreign Office and FBI refused to comment. The U.S. Embassy claimed it had not heard of him.

Morocco

Russian Consulate Explosion Incident Detailed

NC2802184895 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Report by Muhammad al-Jaffan in Rabat]

[FBIS Translated Text] It was learned from a source close to the Moroccan Ministry of Interior that an explosion occurred in the Russian Consulate building in Rabat at 1155 today. When rescue teams arrived in the scene, they found a seriously injured person inside the consul's office.

A preliminary investigation has shown that the person had earlier submitted an application to obtain an entry visa to Russia. When the consul received him, he spoke in a mixture of Arabic and English, which was often incomprehensible, on the safety of his Russian wife who is in Egypt, according to him.

The person then took out a knife, forcing the consul to escape to the consulate yard through a back door. Left alone in the office, the suspect detonated an explosive device that he carried. He was seriously wounded as a result.

An examination of the device revealed that it was a traditional hand grenade filled with nails and fragments of iron. The suspect was taken to the hospital.

The suspect is of Egyptian nationality. His name is Khalid Ahmad Mahmud 'Awad, born in 1958, and he carried an Egyptian passport. He was in Morocco on a visit as a representative of a publishing house.

King Hassan Receives Algerian Culture Minister

LD2802143795 Rabat MAP in English 1301 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, Feb. 28 (MAP)—King Hassan II received here Monday [27 February] visiting

Algerian Culture Minister Slimane Cheikh who handed him a message from Algerian President Liamine Zeroual.

The Algerian minister arrived Monday in Morocco in his capacity as special envoy of the Algerian head of state.

He said the message deals with relations between Algeria and Morocco and the situation in the Arab Maghreb.

For his part, Algerian Foreign Minister Salah Dembri is visiting Mauritania where he was received by Mauritanian President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya.

Algeria has been chairing the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] since January 1994. Libya which was to take over the UMA one-year rotating chairmanship refused the presidency.

Spokesman Denies 'Euro-Maghreban' Talks To Resume

LD2402132295 Rabat MAP in English 1252 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, Feb. 24 (MAP)—Morocco denied news that the European Union has undertaken moves to resume negotiations for a 'Euro-Maghreban association accord'.

Spokesman of the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation denied news report by 'EUROPE' news agency which had said that vice-chairman of the European commission Manuel Marin had invited Moroccan prime minister to resume negotiations for a 'Euro-Maghreban association accord' with Morocco.

The spokesman said no move of the kind was undertaken with the prime minister and minister of foreign affairs and cooperation nor with any other Moroccan official.

'EUROPE' news agency recalled that these negotiations indeed never started after a formal opening session as the European commission was waiting Morocco to accept the negotiations on the basis on the European offers while Morocco was waiting for a reply to its memorandum.

Kuwaiti Fund Extends Loan for Dam Project

LD2802135795 Rabat MAP in English 1244 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, Feb. 28 (MAP)—The Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) extended Morocco a loan amounting to around 75 million dollars for the construction of the "Laghrass" dam, close to the eastern town of Oujda.

The Laghrass dam project includes the building of a reservoir and related installations both up and down stream such as drinking and irrigation water supply works and ducts. The global cost of the project stands at 330 million dollars.

The loan is part of the Morocco-KFAED global accord under which the fund is to lend Morocco finance worth 330 million dollars in 1994 through 1996.

The Kuwaiti Fund already extended Morocco 17 loans totalling 490 million dollars to fund a wide array of projects including agricultural and water harnessing ones.

Outgoing Cabinet Members Honored

LD2702133095 Rabat MAP in English 1235 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, Feb. 27 (MAP)—King Hassan II Saturday [25 February] relieved 17 ministers of the outgoing cabinet of their mission and decorated them with the Wissam of the Throne, Officer's Order or knight Order.

Addressing the outgoing ministers, the sovereign said, 'Your departure from the cabinet is not due to a dereliction of duty on your part, to a misbehavior or to any deviation... I am personally witness that each of you gave evidence, during the exercise of his duties for more than a year, of uprightness, honesty and the material and moral levels, intellectual courage and competence'.

The sovereign also urged the outgoing ministers to remain morally mobilized to serve the homeland and assist the executive power and the moroccan society.

The decorated ministers are Mohamed Drissi Ali M'Chichi (justice), (Mohamed Hassad) (public works), Rachidi Ghazouani (transport), Abdessalam Ahizoun (posts and telecommunications), Driss Toulali (housing), Serge Berdugo (tourism), Abderrahim Harrouchi (public health), Mourad Cherif (finance and foreign investments), Mohamed Gnidirine (national education), Rafik Haddaoui (employment and social affairs), Mohamed Allal Si Nasser (cultural affairs), Aziz Ahasbi (minister delegate in charge of administrative affairs), Ahmed Ouardi (minister delegate in charge of the Moroccan community abroad), Mohamed Motassem (minister delegate in charge of relations with the parliament), Omar Kabbaj (minister delegate in charge of economy boosting), Omar Azziman (minister delegate in charge of human rights) and Chawki Sarghini (under secretary of state in charge of environment protection).

Former Minister of Finance Mohamed Sagou was also decorated with the Wissam of the Throne, Knight Order.

Some members of the technocrat cabinet were not relieved such as those holding the portfolios of trade, privatization, sports, habous and Islamic affairs, agriculture, fisheries and energy.

The end of the mission of the technocrat ministers was decided in the prospect of the formation of a new cabinet including representatives of the parliamentary rightist majority.

The parliamentary majority, made up of the Constitutional Union (UC/liberal), the Popular Movement (MP/rural), the National Democrat Party (PND/liberal), the

National Popular Movement (MNP/rural) and the National Rally of Independents (RNI/liberal) will come back to the cabinet after the failure of the project to institute alternation in the government with the participation of the opposition parties.

These opposition parties, and mainly the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP/leftist), the Istiqlal Party (PI/nationalist) and the organization for Democratic and Popular Action (OADP/extreme left), refused to participate in a government that would include Driss Basri, minister of state for the interior and information.

The sovereign who was keen on maintaining Basri in his post decided last January after several weeks of talks to renounce for the time being to form an alternative government.

The new cabinet where the current parliamentary majority will predominate will be appointed very shortly by King Hassan II at the proposal of Abdellatif Filali who was maintained as prime minister and minister of foreign affairs and cooperation.

Tunisia

Trade Minister, Belgian Envoy View Economic Ties

LD2802224395 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At the headquarters of the ministry today, Trade Minister Slaheddine Ben M'Barek reviewed with the Belgian ambassador to Tunisia means to expand economic relations between the two countries.

The minister highlighted the excellent economic cooperation new in place, noting the efforts exerted to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation, particularly with respect to the establishment of new partnerships between Tunisia and Europe.

The Belgian ambassador stressed again his country's adherence to giving continuous impetus to the Tunisian-Belgian cooperation in a variety of different economic areas.

Industry Minister, Portuguese Envoy Discuss Ties

LD2802222595 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At the headquarters of the ministry today, Industry Minister Slaheddine Bouguerra discussed with the Portuguese ambassador to Tunisia prospects for developing bilateral relations, particularly in the industrial field.

The minister highlighted the importance Tunisia attached to stronger economic cooperation with Portugal, the country that succeeded in achieving EU integration, pushing its industries on the road to acquiring competitive potential, and welcoming the industrial age. Bouguerra pointed out that exchanging experiences and expertise between the two countries allowed today for wider bilateral cooperation.

For his part, the Portuguese ambassador expressed his country's desire for the establishment of wider cooperation with Tunisia, and his satisfaction at the progress of talks between Tunisia and the EU.

Western Sahara

President Marks Anniversary of SADR Declaration

LD2802215695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] On the occasion of the 19th anniversary of the declaration of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic [SADR], which was marked by the Saharan people yesterday, Saharan President Mohamed Abdelaziz stressed the will of the Saharan people to continue the struggle until independence is achieved.

[Begin Abdelaziz recording] On the occasion of the 19th anniversary of the creation of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, we stress and reiterate the pledge, in the name of the fighters of the Popular Liberation Army and the militants of Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] with all our masses everywhere that there is no alternative to our adherence to national independence, and we will continue down that path until we achieve national independence for the SADR. [end recording]

Polisario Blasts 'Human Waves' of Settlers

LD2802212595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] Front condemned, in a statement published today, what it termed "The convergence of Moroccan walkers into Saharan towns to include them in the current process of drawing up the lists of eligible Saharan electors." Polisario was insisting that those Moroccans should return to their country.

The statement from the Saharan Ministry of Information added that there was no end in sight to the human waves that had been pouring into the Saharan territory for the past few years.

The Ministry of Information's statement evidenced its claims with what it called "The new settlers who had been brought in by the Moroccan authorities to the Moroccan-occupied town of Smara."

The same statement insisted, furthermore, that the aim of such operation was to tighten its grip around the Saharans' throats and to force the UN to endorse its own lists of electors.

Kuwait

Higher Education Minister Survives Confidence Vote

LD2802133495 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1211 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 28 Feb—The Kuwaiti National Assembly has renewed its confidence in Minister of Higher Education Dr. Ahmad al-Rub'i. This came when 21 out of 42 deputies who attended the session voted in favor of a vote of confidence in the minister. The vote of confidence in the minister was raised at the request of a number of deputies. [passage omitted]

Under the Kuwaiti Constitution and the internal statute of the National Assembly those who were in favor of this step needed 23 votes at least to be able to withdraw confidence, bearing in mind that ministers can vote.

The National Assembly witnessed heated debates during a question put to the minister al-Rub'i by deputy Mifrij Nahar.

Oman

Tehran Radio Claims Saudi Subversion Efforts Seen

NC2702204295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1750 GMT 27 Feb 95

[From "News And Reports" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Independent sources in Muscat report that the Omani government has uncovered a Saudi subversive network and that its members have admitted that Riyadh provided them with equipment to carry out acts of sabotage in Oman. For further details, here is a report by our political analyst Muhammad al-Ansari:

[Begin al-Ansari recording] Independent sources in Muscat have said that the security agencies in the Sultanate of Oman recently uncovered a major subversive network financed by Saudi Arabia. The network was planning to provoke disturbances in the Sultanate of Oman. The Omani security agencies succeeded in arresting the leaders of this subversive network in Muscat. These agencies are trying to unravel the threads and extensions of this network and arrest its members in other Omani towns, particularly in the western towns of the Sultanate.

These sources said the detained members of this network admitted that they received support, funds, and instructions from Riyadh and that they were planning to provoke disturbances and riots while Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id was outside Muscat on his annual tour of a number of Omani cities. Every year Sultan Qabus makes a trip outside Muscat and spends it in a number of towns among Omani tribes. He began his domestic tour a short time ago. These sources also noted that it is likely that the detention of this Saudi subversive network in Oman will be announced after Sultan Qabus returns to Muscat. It is expected that should the detention be announced, it would cause tension in relations between Oman and Saudi Arabia. It should be recalled that Saudi Arabia has border disputes with the Sultanate of Oman and claims some Omani territory. This dispute was submitted to the United Nations in the past. Another report said that the competent Omani authorities seized with the detainees of the Saudi subversive network a large quantity of foreign currencies and weapons.

According to informed political circles of Saudi foreign policy, the funding of the subversive Saudi network in the Sultanate of Oman is part of Riyadh's well-known policies of interfering in the domestic affairs of neighboring Arab countries and its constant efforts to provoke upheavals and disturbances in these countries. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

CDLR Bulletin No. 35 Issued on Saudi Events

MS2802160195 London CDLR MONITOR in English 17 Feb 95

[Bulletin No. 35 of the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia, CDLR; issued on 17 February—received by fax 27 February]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Your Right to Know:

Regarding Communique 24, which was issued with the previous bulletin, the Committee appealed to the youth of the country to actively participate in a "sit-in" protest at the King Abdul Aziz Mosque in Riyadh, on the third Friday of the month of Shawwal (17th Shawwal).

During the "sit-in" there will be Koran recitation and Du'a'. In the same communique the Committee also requested the Nation's youth to do their utmost during the month of Ramadan, to prepare for this protest.

The Committee explained that the necessity for such an appeal has arisen due to the continued stubbornness of the regime in keeping the reformers behind bars, despite the so-called "Ramadan royal pardon", which, as it happens, only applies to criminals and murderers. Also explained by the Committee was that the efforts made by some of the faithful with the Government and with Shaykh Ibn Baz, have not come to any useful conclusion until now. The Government has until the date of the protest to make up their minds, along with the official Scholars, and to proceed to implement the correct decisions with regard to the reformers and their supporters.

This recent communique was very popular amongst the Nations youth, and was widely distributed in a very short period of time, and the Committee's office received many enquiries and communications regarding the contents of the communique. As these enquiries are concerned with very important issues which affect the whole of our society, and not just the enquirer, we have decided to examine some of the points here.

Some of our brothers in the western region protested to the Committee as to why a mosque was not designated for a protest in their area, and they queried whether this was because it was felt that they were not as committed to the cause as their brothers in Riyadh. After consultations, the Mosque of Shaykh Safar Al-Hawali was chosen as a venue for a protest to take place on the same day as the Riyadh protest.

With regard to the brothers from other regions who contacted the Committee regarding the designation of Mosques in their area for similar protests, this is still under consideration and we are still in consultation with our legitimate leaders regarding this matter, although it must be said, that for the time being we would prefer to concentrate on Jeddah and Riyadh, for a variety of reasons of which we are unable to elaborate upon at the present time.

Other enquiries were received enquiring about the legitimate leaders and their personalities as it is not wise, nor useful, to declare their names at present for obvious reasons. However, we are able to confirm that these leaders are among the most credible personalities in the Nation. It may be possible, after some time and if conditions permit, to declare their names in the open.

Some citizens contacted the Committee to convey their fears that such protests may lead to violent confrontation, which could then lead to the "Algerian-ization" of the situation, in the sense that the situation within the country could become similar to that in Algeria at present.

We accept these concerns, but we would like to confirm with full conviction, that the opposite is actually true. This is because keeping silent and not participating in any sort of peaceful action whatsoever, may eventually lead our youth along a more chaotic and violent path. In fact, such positive and effective group protests help to absorb the anger and energy of the youth and gives them the feeling that at least they have done something for their reformers and leaders. Such activity will keep our youth occupied and serve as a release for their energy, rather than the situation at present where a continual state of boredom prompts them to repeat the questions, "for how long will we keep silent, and for how long will we accept slavery?". As it happens, some of our youth were on the verge of giving in to violent action, but the intervention of some of our legitimate leaders has so far prevented this. However, such intervention will not have an effect over a long period of time, making a positive peaceful protest a much needed necessity to release pent-up tension and anger, while at the same time making the people feel that they have done something for their faith and their Scholars and also gives them the satisfaction of a psychological confrontation. These protests will also fulfil a role as a release for youthful enthusiasm.

With regard to referring to a situation arising similar to that in Algeria, it seems to be very clear that the person, or persons making the comparison, does not have a complete understanding of the present situation in Algeria, otherwise he would have realised that the most prominent mistake committed by the Islamic movement in Algeria, was the cessation of peaceful protest, and in particular the cancellation of the demonstration which was called by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) immediately after the cancellation of the elections. In this case, it was not surprising that their energetic and restless youth then resorted to violence and chaos which removed the decision making from the hands of the moderate and rational leaders.

Many brothers were concerned that the protests may escalate into violent confrontation with the security forces. To answer their concerns, we would say that firstly, our Muslim youth are angered by their feelings of weakness and despair, as they see their leaders imprisoned one after the other. They hear stories of torture and humiliation. A peaceful protest will at least give them some personal satisfaction and prevent them from resorting to violence.

Secondly, our country's youth are very highly disciplined and this discipline was very much in evidence during the Buraydah Intifadha and the successive protests. Our youth gave us an example of great self-control which greatly affected the security forces, whose anger towards the Government increased when they were forced to face their own countrymen.

Thirdly, how can a confrontation occur when we openly requested our youth to remain in the mosque, recite Koran and make Du'a'. What can the security forces do in answer to this? They may remove the young men from the mosque, or at worst detain them. Then what? They will be arresting people for ever more, as the arrests experiment has clearly shown that it changes nothing.

However, we can confirm in the strongest terms that such peaceful activities are the most successful method of preventing our youth from taking irresponsible actions which may throw the Nation into anarchy. At the same time we would like to say that all these peaceful activities may not prevent some sporadic activities by some over-enthusiastic citizens. The Committee would also like to state that any violence that may occur, despite the fact that we do not condone such action, we hold the Government in total responsibility for any occurrences, as the Government provokes the Nations youth with their oppression, torture and imprisonment.

There are some concerned people who fear the repetition of what occurred in the meeting in the al-Shabab Club, as many people where unable to reach the place and the security forces were able to pressurise the citizens who actually arrived. The comparison here is not valid for the following reasons:

Firstly, the location of the al-Shabab Club was far from any centre of population and in such a location the authorities would have no hesitation in suppressing and preventing a protest. However, using a mosque, such as King 'Abd-al-'Aziz mosque in the middle of town, for a protest will make the authorities think twice before provoking any confrontation.

Secondly, the preparation for the meeting in the al-Shabab Club was at short-notice of only 24 hours and even then about 1000 people managed to reach the club. However, with this appeal for action, the feeling is high, the preparation is considerable, the timing is right and the venue is more suitable, inshallah, as it is difficult to close or to lay siege to, without making it obvious to the whole world, which is, in fact, one of the main aims.

We would like to emphasise once again the utilisation of the month of Ramadan to encourage people to strive towards the success of these protests and to make use of the fact that many people travel for 'Umrah (minor pilgrimage) to spread the bulletins and cassettes, and to exchange ideas. We would call upon all Muslims to make Du'a' (Supplications) to Allah asking to give our Nation victory and victory and to rid us of our tyrannic oppressors. We would also appeal strongly to our Muslim sisters to help their brothers in the distribution of bulletins and cassettes, especially as in many cases, it is easier for them to do so.

These are some of the enquiries we have received, and in future bulletins we may discuss the legitimacy of such activities, and their positive and negative effects on other reform activities.

News Royal Pardon...

The royal family have decided to rescind their opposing stand to Nayif concerning his actions towards Maha al-Sudayri. The Committee has discovered that the so called "Ramadan royal pardon" is to include the beloved Khalid 'Abd-al-Rahman. An interesting point to make here is that an English journalist contacted the Committee to enquire about the story. It was explained to him how strange it was in our society for a man to defend his wife's lover. The journalist sardonically replied "why do you say 'your society' as there is not a society in the world where a man would defend his wife's lover, or even his girlfriends lover."

Goodbye to Safety and Security...

The Kingdom, until recently, was a shining example of safety and security. Foreign writers, when describing security in our country would talk as if they were describing some imaginary Kingdom. At one time al Sa'ud were very proud of such praise. What has befallen the country today? The era of safety and security has gone and the only type of security that remains is that of the royal family.

How can security be considered important when the only concern of the Government is the suppression of reformers and preachers? How can security be kept when the senior princes are the "godfathers" of drug trafficking and trade and the keepers of prostitution and other vices? How can security be viable when every one of the 7000 princes has surrounded himself with a private militia of hooligans and hoodlums who are protected by the princes and Al Sa'ud's authority from any answerability to the judiciary system? How can security be feasible when unemployment and poverty have spread while at the same time, al Sa'ud's cronies are not satisfied unless they have billions?

Stories of theft and crime have increased to the extent that we have decided to disregard the publication of many of the reports we receive as they are simply too numerous to mention. However, this week a new trend of theft has come to light as we will explain.

During the last two weeks the amplification systems of at least seven mosques in Riyadh alone were stolen in broad daylight, while twenty seven air conditioners were stolen from another mosque. The most bizarre theft of the week was the disappearance of half a million Riyal from the Interior Ministry's safe. We would therefore like to congratulate Fahd and his brothers for their distinguished and renowned undertaking in keeping the Nation safe and secure!!

Ramadan Quiz...

The following message will remain a puzzle to most people, with the exception of one person who will understand exactly what it is about.

Your family was good but your upbringing was not. Allah, has given you intelligence and education but you have not used these gifts for a useful purpose. At one time people held you in high regard and looked to you for honourable stands, but instead you preferred to take a dishonourable position.

Despite your disagreement with the reformers, the people still held the belief that you were a man of principle. However, it would seem that your slogan is "the end justifies the means." Your principles and statements have gone with the wind. The years have past, and every year has exposed defects in your personality. Despite your intelligence and knowledge, you are still pathetically clinging to this dying regime in the hope of greater position. Your know very well that you have a position in name only. You have allowed yourself to accept humiliation from all members of the ruling family and have chosen to be their trumpet. What then? You accepted a role in playing the corrupt intelligence game in order to please the ones who humiliated you and your family. You must understand, that you and your guards are exposed. All your communications, relations and plans, your letters to your master and his to you, have all been disclosed.

We do not need to name the people who came to you, the writers and journalists. However, a word of advice to you, my intelligent friend. Call back your "African spy" and spend your money on someone more capable. With regard to the Palestinian, do not feel complacent, as he is a double agent. Also, could we advise you that "L S" is not your type and she is no good to you.

We had believed that you had enough intelligence to realise why we have kept quiet about you. It would seem, however, that your intelligence has betrayed you and your slavish devotion to Al Sa'ud has destroyed your abilities.

This puzzle is a final test to your genius. The ball is now in your court.

We would like to finish by saying that a ministers position, under Al Sa'ud, is not even equivalent to a seat in a primary school.

Finally, enjoy a happy life with "Widaad".

Declaration from al-Qasim...

Al-Jazirah newspaper published last Monday contained an alleged message from the people of Qasim to congratulate the King and his brothers for the coming of the Holy month of Ramadan.

In reply to the newspaper, the people of Qasim would like to state categorically that the message was a complete fabrication as the people have never requested a publication of this sort. On the contrary, they declare that they are extremely resentful and furious towards the King and his cronies and they hold him fully responsible for all the injustice, oppression and arrests, as well as all the other calamities which have befallen them such as humiliation, the restricting of business practices and land confiscation etc.

The people of Qasim ask Allah, in this holy month, to give them revenge on their oppressors and to expose them to the world. They ask Allah to give them victory and to return their sons and wealth to them.

New Issues...

The Committee has issued a new audio cassette which contains a debate with the Official spokesman Dr. Muhammad al-Muhaysini and the office manager of the Committee Dr. Sald al-Faqih. The debate includes many enquiries and questions regarding the Committees procedures programmes and relations.

Also discussed are rumours regarding the Committee, as well as about the relations of the Government and royal family both at home and abroad. The situation of the reformers is also discussed.

Within the Kingdom, the first issue of a new bulletin with the name Minbar Al-Sha'b (The Platform of the people) was distributed. This new issue contained messages to the Government, Scholars, detainees, army, intelligence and the Committee.

Al-Nazir bulletin has continued its publication and to date has published three issues. The Council of Reform and advice also published two letters in reply to Shaykh Ibn-Baz's Fatwa regarding peace with the Israel. They also published a communique explaining that all charities under the supervision of Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz should be treated with great suspicion and the people should donate their money with care.

A Billion and a Half...

That "deprived" citizen, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz had one of his properties taken by the state which was newly valued for an amount of 900 million Riyal. His "poor" brother Prince Madid, had a new evaluation of his land in Mecca which came to only 600 million Riyal. These valuations were paid out in the last budget.

Al Sa'ud's Tricks...

After the clear defeat of the Government in their futile attempts to reduce the credibility of the Committee with academics, the media and political institutions, they have now resorted to a very risky method through their embassies in Washington and London.

In the past, roumors were spread by the intelligence department or minor officials, but at this stage both ambassadors have personally, adopted the spreading of rumours in the hope of weakening the Committee's formidable reputation before the institutions mentioned above.

In Washington, Bandar Bin-Sultan has been repeating for two months that the Committee is on the verge of reconciliation with the Government. He repeats this rumour to international journalists. However, as this "reconciliation" has not yet taken place, nor is there any indication that it is likely to in the future, his statements have caused him great embarrassment, especially as the journalists have begun to question the credibility and truthfulness of his pronouncements.

Regarding Ghazi al-Qusaybi, in London, we have learned that he is placing his money on an internal disagreement within the Committee that will lead to the dissolution of the Committee.

Such rumours should have been left to lesser officials, but this shows the amount of pressure and discomfort the Committee is generating for the regime.

The People of Kuwait...

The Committee in London congratulated the Kuwaiti people on the release of their sons from the prisons of al Sa'ud, in which they have spent two years, despite the intensive efforts of high Kuwaiti officials to ensure their early release. This delay was all due to the stubbornness and stupidity of al Sa'ud, and especially Nayif, who insisted on keeping them in detention despite a verdict of innocence from several Saudi courts.

After the efforts of the group, "Ansar Al-Haq" with the co- operation and co-ordination of the Committee from London, the release of the prisoners was successful.

Du'a' Horrifies Al Sa'ud...

Shaykh Muhammad al-Muhaysini, the famous reciter and Imam from Buraydah, received a letter from Prince Nayif informing him to cease making Du'a' for the imprisoned reformers and against the oppressors and unbelievers.

The Committee has come to know that al Sa'ud are horrified after hearing that a large number of mosques, during Ramadan, are openly making Du'a' on the oppressors. This phenomena occurring in the Kingdom has spread to Islamic Centres worldwide,

Financial Times Opens Fire...

The London Financial Times newspaper published an extensive article regarding the economic situation in the Kingdom which was extremely critical and revealed dangerous information regarding the state of the country.

The article has caused a great disturbance on world money markets which has greatly angered the Saudi Embassy. The Embassy has accused the newspaper of collusion with the Committee.

The translation of the important points Within the article will be published in the next issue.

King Fahd's 'Deficiencies' Outlined

MS2802161295 London CDLR MONITOR in English 27 Feb 95

[Attachment to Bulletin No. 36 of the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia (CDLR); issued on 27 February—received by fax on 28 February]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

A King As Famous As Nero

Except for his obvious lack of musical talent, King Al-Sa'ud, Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz will be remembered with the Roman Emperor Nero. Fahd too watches while his realm's economic, social and political problems reduce it to nothingness.

Perhaps his father, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, knew better. Fahd was never appointed to high office during his father's lifetime, though younger princes were. As a young man his performance at the princes' school in Riyadh revealed an absence of aptitude for learning and his four-year stay there left him semi-literate. It doesn't stop there and he manifests an overall lack of interest in anything except personal comforts (Sa'ud liked photography; Faysal knew Koranic sayings and Khalid was fond of falconry) Fahd personal interests are in the 3 Bs: Blondes, booze and baccarat. He is a skirt chaser, a drunk and a gambler.

These deficiencies show in the way Fahd run Saudi Arabia since he became king in 1982. His record of governance and personal behaviour in office had elevated Fahd to Nero's companionship and this is why this king of the dark ages and pages of history replaces our regular Prince of The Month bulletin. Following are some of the facts about our most unfavourite subject:

Fahd is lazy and uninformed. He undertakes little if any work and doesn't wake up until late in the afternoon of the day. Even communications from heads of state go unanswered, even those of President Clinton. Because he doesn't read the briefs prepared for him, he's known to hear about important things well after the time to do something about them has passed. This was true during the recent Yemeni civil war; Fahd discovered that his brother Sultan was spending millions of dollars supporting the secession of the south well after the fact.

Fahd doesn't observe the most basic rules of good behaviour. Over the years he has been late to meetings with President Bush, Queen Elizabeth, King Husayn and the Emir of Kuwait. His insulting behaviour towards his guests led Argentine President Carlos Menem to cut short a 4-day visit official visit to the kingdom after two days. Feisty Margaret Thatcher reacted to Fahd's rudeness by hitting back with: "He hasn't much to say for himself, has he".

Like so many ignorant people Fahd abhors the presence of intelligent people in his government. His resentment of former Minister of Petroleum Ahmad Zaki Yamani was pronounced, he eventually fired the latter for failing to raise oil production and prices at the same time! Now Fahd sees very little of his nephew and Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al-Faysal, because of the latter's undeniable talents and disapproval for Fahd's ways.

Fahd is extraordinarily vain. He chooses the pictures of himself the Saudi press is allowed to print, and he has been known to tell newspapers and magazines not to run pictures of better looking men too often .

Fahd listens to fortune tellers more than he listen to his political advisors. For example, he spends little time in Riyadh, his capital city, because a fortune teller told him that he would die there. Following the advice for another fortune teller who told him to keep his youngest son Abdul-Aziz in sight at all times. For years he took the then teenager with him during personal and official visits overseas.

Fahd favours his full brothers and sons with high positions. Brother Sultan, of pay-off fame, is Minister of defence; Brother Nayif, a known drug addict, is Minister of interior and Salman is governor of the important province of Riyadh. Fahd's son Muhammad is governor of the oil-rich Eastern Province; son Faysal is Head of The Youth Organisation and son Sa'ud is Deputy Head of intelligence. The favourite son, the talentless Abdul-Aziz, 22, has just been appointed Special advisor to His majesty in cabinet minister rank—apparently with limitless powers to interfere in everything.

Fahd owns two Boeing aircraft, a 747-300 and a 747 Special Performance models. Both are equipped with elevators, sauna and chandeliers. He owns 36 palaces in Saudi Arabia including two multi-billion dollar ones in Jeddah and Mecca. Overseas he owns palaces in London, Marbella, Nice and Geneva. Naturally all palaces have gold fittings and textures.

According to Fortune magazine, dated 11th of September 1985, Fahd is the second wealthiest man in the world, after the Sultan of Brunei. The magazine, five years ago, estimated his fortune at $20 billions now it is nearer to $35 billion, specially due to the "blessings" of the gulf war. During the same period which saw his fortune soar the annual income of the average Saudi citizen declined from $11,000 to $4,000.

Fahd finds more and more ways to squander the wealth of his country. On the occasion of the Eid in 1994, he gave each of his brothers a cash present of $27 million. Other members of the family got $10 million each. Most recently, Prince Abdul-Aziz bin Fahd was awarded a $6 million increase in his annual Salaries. His basic salary was not announced.

Most recently, aware that the ship of state is foundering, Fahd has developed fears of being forced to step down. He is known to have told, perhaps pleaded with, the American ambAssador that he would like to die while still King. Legacy is likely to haunt Saudi Arabia, the muslim and Arab worlds and the countries dependent on oil for decades. London, Tuesday the 27th of February 1995

Yemen

Salih Meets Negotiating Team, Praises Saudi Pact

JN2802150895 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih last night received the delegation that represented our country in the recent month-long negotiations with Saudi Arabia to draft the memorandum of understanding, which was signed in Mecca [word indistinct] between the two sisterly, neighboring countries. The meeting was attended by brother Major General Vice President 'Abd- Rabbuh Mansur Hadi. The delegation comprised brothers Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the House of Representatives; 'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development; and Isma'il al-Wazir, adviser to the president for legal affairs. [Words indistinct] Yemeni-Saudi borders and promoting relations between the two sisterly, neighboring countries.

During the meeting, the brother president expressed thanks and appreciation for the sincere, national efforts exerted by the brother head and members of the Yemeni negotiating team to arrive at the memorandum of understanding signed between our country and Saudi Arabia. The president said that what has been achieved constitutes a constructive step that will open new horizons for the progress of relations between the two sisterly countries and lay the foundation for arriving at a final and fair solution to the border issue between the two countries. He stressed that the good efforts exerted by the Yemeni negotiators [words indistinct].

Reportage Continues on Zakho Car Explosion

Opposition Radio Details Incident

NC2802153095 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A booby-trapped car explosion in Zakho in northern Iraq on Monday [27 February] killed between 70 and 80 and wounded some 200 others.

The commander of the UN forces in Iraq has said that the car was rigged with 100-200 kilograms of TNT. He added that the explosion occurred close to a crowded market between 0900 and 1000 on Monday and that the victims were civilians, according to information he received from the guards that were dispatched to the scene.

Regime Accused of Perpetrating Incident

NC2802210295 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On the morning of 27 February, a big explosion of a car-bomb in a street in the steadfast city of Zakho left more than 80 martyrs and injured more than 150 others. The explosion also destroyed vehicles and shops in the area which is one of the most crowded in Zakho. This criminal and heinous act shocked the Kurdish people. International news agencies reported the news rapidly and contacted the Kurdistan prime minister for details of the horrific incident.

As soon as he heard the news, Kusrat Rasul 'Ali, prime minister of Kurdistan and member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] Political Bureau, pointed accusing fingers at the intelligence agencies of the dictatorial regime in Baghdad. He noted the chaos and lack of discipline in the (Badinan) region after suspicious ties were strengthened between the influential figures within the Barzani leadership and the Iraqi regime's police agencies, notably the facilities that the Barzani leadership offers to the dictatorial regime's henchmen on the crossing points leading to the Kurdistan areas that are under the control of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP].

It seems that the Barzani leadership has again been enticed willingly by the Iraqi regime's police agencies. It seems that this leadership believes the Iraqi dictatorial regime's rosy promises to make Mas'ud Barzani and his leadership an absolute ruler of Kurdistan after undermining and expelling the PUK from the arena. We do not want to persuade the Barzani leadership to give up the material gains, privileges, and arms it receives from [Saddam Husayn] al-Tikriti's leadership. This is up to Mas'ud Barzani or the decision-making center in his leadership. The verdict on these relations is left to the Kurdish and Iraqi masses and to history. However, what we want to affirm to Barzani is that the 'Aflaqite leadership will never harbor honest intentions or honor its promises to the Kurdish people or parties regardless of this party's stances or practices that serve the ruling dictatorship in Baghdad. As the 'Aflaqites' bloody and conspiratorial history against their own kinfolk has shown, Saddam and his regime will one day inevitably turn their back on the current Barzani leadership. There is proof of this that is known to everyone. [passage omitted]

The PUK's quick accusation of Saddam Husayn and his dictatorial regime of being behind the car-bomb without conclusive evidence, affirms several facts:

First, the PUK sees that the Iraqi regime's repressive agencies are the only party that stands to gain from this operation or any other operation that targets the Kurdish masses and disrupts their security, life, interests, and the continuing democratic experiment in Kurdistan. The PUK believes that the current bloody conflict with the KDP is temporary and secondary and must eventually end in one way or another and that its main contradiction is with the dictatorship in Baghdad, and not with the KDP.

Second, the PUK did not try to exploit the car-bomb incident to accuse the KDP directly of carrying out this crime, even though the KDP's special security agency engineered similar incidents. To cite one example, we recall when the KDP diverted the funeral procession of 'Uthman al-Munawwar in al-Sulaymaniyah on 13 June, 1994 from the cemetery to the headquarters of the PUK and tried to occupy it with members who joined the funeral and opened fire at the guards, who were forced to defend themselves. The exchange of fire left many innocent people dead or injured. In this incident, The KDP turned his cadres into scapegoats for narrow-minded political gains.

Third, the precedent of detonating bombs in Kurdish cities was the forte of the Iraqi regime's agents. It did not previously exist among the Kurdish parties, particularly in public places or against defenseless citizens. This is the case if we exclude the recent operations carried out by the KDP's special security agency in Kurdish cities that are under the control of the PUK, such as hurling grenades at homes of citizens at night or planting explosives near the homes of PUK members and supporters. In addition, the KDP carried out the bombing of bridges and electricity pylons. Such subversive operations were previously carried out only by the dictatorial regime's security agencies and hireling agents to disrupt security and stability in Kurdistan.

Fourth, there is growing support by the Kurdish masses for the PUK's policies in the (Badinan) areas, particularly in Zakho. In addition, there is growing resentment among the masses of the Barzani leadership's policy represented in its plundering the customs revenues, its insistence on continuing the fighting, imposing economic blockade on three governorates in Kurdistan, and its exposed collaboration with the dictatorial regime in

Baghdad. Moreover, the citizens in the city of Dahuk have protested the KDP practices and when the Kurdistan National Salvation Movement members attempted to stage a peaceful demonstration to protest the continuing fighting, the KDP arrested hundreds of citizens. These are positive signs that will serve the PUK policy and its peaceful and democratic goals. These goals are in line with those of the other Kurdish national parties and the broad masses throughout Kurdistan. All these factors will prompt the PUK to exert serious efforts and [words indistinct] the balance of force that has begun to tilt in favor of the PUK in the (Badinan) area in particular.

As we discuss the PUK's stance on the car-bomb crime, we must also recall the stance of Barzani and of the official spokesman for the KDP Political Bureau. As soon as the incident occurred, they openly accused the PUK of engineering the operation without waiting for the results of the initial investigations which we hope the KDP security agencies in Zakho will conduct. This irresponsible stance by the KDP affirms a number of facts:

First, the Barzani leadership is trying every means to defame the PUK. To achieve this goal it does not bother to sacrifice the lives of hundreds and thousands of innocent people. We hope that the Barzani leadership itself was not behind this crime. This crime reminds us of the incident in the Abadan movie in the last days of the shah's rule. The Iranian Savak agents burned down the movie theater to blame it on the Iranian opposition, particularly the Islamic opposition.

Second, Barzani and the KDP Political Bureau's direct accusation of the PUK for perpetrating the car-bomb blast so quickly without waiting for the results of the investigations affirms beyond any doubt the Barzani leadership's collusion with the Saddam leadership in this scheme. Mas'ud Barzani did not allude in any way to the role of the Iraqi regime's spying agencies in carrying out the operation. It seems he is quite sure that the dictatorial regime would not commit such crimes or could be behind it. This raises doubt about collusion between the Barzani and Saddam leaderships separately or together in implementing this criminal and cowardly operation.

Third, by accusing the PUK of carrying out the bombing, the Barzani leadership is trying to achieve a number of goals. It seeks to equate the bombing of bridges and electricity pylons and the hurling of grenades in the areas under the PUK, which greatly harmed it, and similar acts in the areas under its control so as to lay the blame on the PUK. Also, the Barzani leadership is trying to make the Iraqi regime and all our people's enemies understand that it considers the PUK as its number 1 enemy and that it is prepared to play any role assigned it, no matter how treasonous or criminal, against the PUK, the democratic experiment, and the Kurdish masses in Kurdistan.

In conclusion, we want to say that Barzani is required before the Kurdish masses and the international community to conduct a thorough and honest investigation into this disaster and bring the criminals and masterminds to trial no matter what their posts in any political parties because this crime is the first of its kind in Kurdistan in terms of the number of victims, bestiality, and deliberate mass killing of the people. This is if the Barzani leadership really wants to uncover the perpetrators and masterminds of the crime. However, if it tries to play games it will only be the target of derision, anger, and future revenge by the Kurdish masses, and it will be damned by history. Glory and immortality for the martyrs of the steadfast city of Zakho and to all martyrs of our people and liberation revolution. Disgrace and shame for the killers and agent hirelings.

Kurdistan Leaders Condemn Bombing

NC2802172695 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Regarding local reactions to the Zakho car-bomb, the parliament of Kurdistan issued a statement signed by Deputy Speaker Najat Ahmad 'Aziz Agha denouncing and condemning the crime. The statement said: Certainly this crime is another plot concocted by our people's enemies against the democratic experiment and the parliament and government of the region of Kurdistan, utilizing the current situation in Kurdistan.

Kusrat Rasul 'Ali, prime minister of the government of Kurdistan issued a statement on the painful incident in Zakho. He expressed his deep sadness and regret. He accused the enemies of the people and of the democratic experiment in Kurdistan of committing crime, thereby exploiting the current tense situation in Kurdistan.

PUK Releases Statement

NC2802192095 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Statement by the PUK Political Bureau regarding the Zakho car bomb incident, issued on 27 February; place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan] Political Bureau received with deep sorrow and sadness the news of the major explosion that occurred in Zakho on 27 February, 1995, and left approximately 80 people dead, more than 150 wounded, destroyed 15 shops, and burned more than 20 vehicles. The perpetrators of this heinous crime are, doubtless, turncoat enemies who are lying in wait for our people and whose consciences are void of humane feelings.

These criminals who exploited the current situation in Kurdistan want to carry out enemy plans—to sabotage and disrupt security and stability in Kurdistan. Therefore, we must exert more efforts to end the internecine fighting and normalize the situation in order to block the way of our people's enemies and their agents and prevent them from carrying out their schemes and bar the return of the dictatorial rule of the Baghdad regime.

We believe that the party that seeks to perpetuate the domestic warfare and obstruct the efforts being made to restore security and stability to Kurdistan is serving the enemies of the people willingly or unwillingly. They are also paving the way for their plans and plots and for recurrence of such painful incidents. As we denounce this heinous crime, we will do all we can to contain the reasons that lead to the implementation of the criminals' plots and the enemies of the people, foremost of these is the civil war that has become the greatest hurdle in the way of restoring peace and stability and prepare the ground for such crimes and disasters. We all must cooperate and strive, out of sense of our responsibility, to find the criminals and prevent such crimes from recurring. We offer our condolences to the families of the martyrs of this distressing disaster and wish the injured quick recovery.

[Signed] The PUK Political Bureau, on 27 February, 1995

Rebel Radio Condemns Zakho Bombing

NC0103084195 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Feb 95

[From the newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Incoming reports state that on Sunday 8 Esfand 1373—27 February 1995—an extremely strong bomb which had been planted in a vehicle exploded in a crowded marketplace in Zakho in Iraqi Kurdistan's Dahuk Province. The blast killed at least 75 people and wounded 130. Many of the wounded are in critical condition and apparently the death toll may still rise. Many more were maimed in the blast. The explosion set fire to vehicles, shops, and houses throughout the area and inflicted heavy damage on the defenseless people of Zakho.

It has not yet been clarified who perpetrated this terrorist act or how it was engineered. And like many similar tragedies and incidents that have taken place in our calamity-stricken area, the perpetrators may never be identified because unlike many other parts of the world, terrorists in this region are not accustomed to claiming responsibility for their criminal acts.

No matter what person, organization, or government perpetrated this crime, we sincerely extend our condolences and sympathies to the relatives and next of kin in this heart-rending incident. We share in their sorrow and strongly condemn the perpetrators of this inhuman act. O that even if for one day only, a (?decent) life would begin in the countries of our region and that the sinister shadow of war, discord, assassinations, and massacres would be lifted from the heads of the residents in these countries. O that the terrorists in our region would be brave enough to identify themselves to the world so that everyone could directly curse them.

Health Ministry Ready To Treat Victims

JN0103122495 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Statement by a "responsible source" at the Health Ministry on 1 March]

[FBIS Translated Text] Out of the concern of leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, to provide health care to all Iraqi citizens, the Health Ministry is ready to receive all the individuals injured in the criminal explosion yesterday in Zakho district. That explosion left many people dead or injured.

The source said: The necessary medical equipment is ready to evacuate the wounded to Health Ministry hospitals in Mosul.

The source added: Despite the lack of life-saving medicine in our Mosul hospitals, some essential requirements were supplied. On this occasion, we urge the international organizations to help us in this regard and not to submit to the U.S. [word indistinct] pressures to impose the embargo on our militant [mujahid] people.

PUK Accuses KDP of Shelling Residential Areas

NC2802181995 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1500 yesterday, the artillery of the capitulationist leadership of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] directed heavy artillery fire at the residential areas in Pirzin and (Shaway). The concentrated bombardment left two children aged five dead and injured three others. The indiscriminate barrage by the Barzani leadership's gunmen also killed more than 30 sheep and destroyed a large number of homes.

It should be recalled that the Barzani leadership pounded Rawanduz and the (Binslawa) complex on the day before yesterday. This shows its persistence in its terrorist practices against innocent citizens in Kurdistan.

Situation in Northern Iraq Updated

NC0103120395 Istanbul MILLIYET in Turkish 24 Feb 95 p 3

[Report by Namik Durukan: "Northern Iraq Divided Into Three Parts]

[FBIS Translated Text] Irbil, al-Sulaymaniyah—Some 1,000 people are reported to have been killed in the clashes between the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], which is headed by Mas'ud Barzani, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], which is headed by Jalal Talabani, during the past three months. The fighting has intensified in the vicinity of Irbil, Shaqlawah, Rawandoz, and Panjwin. The latter is close to Iran's border. Intensive fighting, in which heavy arms are used, is continuing around Irbil and Rawandoz. Several artillery shells are reported to have hit 20 houses in the civilian settlements in the vicinity of Kasnazan, Diyala, Rawandoz, which are close to Irbil. Several people are reported to have been killed.

The KDP forces and the Hizballah peshmergas have launched a joint attack on Panjwin, which is under PUK's control. Some 700 armed men were involved in the offensive. The capture of the Seriresh Palace [spelling as published], which is under Barzani's control, is said to be PUK's most important objective. The palace has been pounded with artillery guns and missiles. The hospitals are full of wounded peshmergas. However, the medical personnel are unable to treat them because pharmaceuticals are in short supply.

Who Controls What?

The failure of the effort to force the sides to agree to a cease- fire has led to the division of northern Iraq into three parts. Talabani's forces control Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah, Barzani's forces control Dahuk and the districts and towns around Irbil, and the peshmergas of the Hizballah and the Islamic Movement organizations control Halabjah and an area on Iran's border.

Talabani: "Turkey Puts Pressure on Us"

Talabani is in Kalacholan [spelling as published] at the present time. The area, which is at a distance of 20 km from the Iranian border, is a training center for the Kurdish military units. Stressing that the Kurds do not stand to gain anything from the clashes, Talabani said: "Turkey supports the effort for peace. The Workers Party of Kurdistan [PKK] stands to gain from the failure of the peace initiatives."

Arguing that the closure of the Habur border gate by Turkey will end the clashes between the KDP and PUK, Talabani said: PUK controls 70-75 percent of the region. However, the KDP controls 75 percent of the economic resources and revenues. The closure of the border gate will block the revenues Barzani receives. So, he will agree to make peace."

Talabani also argued that Turkey has put pressure on the Kurds to force them to agree to hold talks with the Baghdad administration. He said: "Turkey must not put pressure on us to force us to hold talks with Baghdad. Nor do we believe that the rapprochement between Ankara and Baghdad will yield auspicious results. Turkey does not want us to establish links with the PKK. We do not want to reach an agreement with the dictator in Baghdad."

KDP Siege of Banjwin Reportedly Continues

LD2802142595 Tehran IRNA in English 1328 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kermanshah, Feb. 28, IRNA—The city of Banjwin in the Iraqi Kurdistan has been under the siege of Kurdistan Democrat Party [KDP] for the past 48 hours, the al-Sulaymaniyah television announced Monday night. The television said that the forces of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] were defending the city.

Earlier reports said that the armed forces of the KDP, led by Mas'ud Barzani, were advancing towards Banjwin. Residents have either fled to the nearby heights or taken shelter in basements. According to the television, the electricity supplies are cut off in Banjwin and people are facing severe shortage of foodstuff and fuel. Several local people, interviewed by the television, called for ending clashs among Muslim Iraqi Kurds.

AL-'IRAQ Criticizes U.S. Sanctions Stand

JN2802140995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0850 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-'IRAQ has stated that the discordant, obnoxious, and shameless U.S. conduct has exposed the scope and goals of the anti-Iraq aggression and shown the world the United State's anti-Iraq policy.

In an article published today, the paper adds that the continuation of the extremely harsh and severe Iraq sanctions are meant to achieve what the United States and its allies failed to achieve with the sweeping military aggression they mounted against Iraq.

The paper goes on to say: The comprehensive dimensions of the exploitative U.S. strategy, which provides for adding Iraqi oil resources to the oil resources of the Arab region and placing them in the U.S. basket, have not been achieved, because the Iraqi oil resources are still in Iraqi hands. This is a strategic U.S. failure to be added to the failure of the military aggression. That is why the United States is doing its utmost to exterminate the Iraqi people and divide their country by maintaining and stepping up the sanctions.

The paper says: The Europeans realize that by keeping silent they had fallen into the trap of selfish U.S. interests, and they made many sacrifices while they watched the Gulf oil resources fall into U.S. hands.

The paper underscores a basic fact; namely, that the United States is well aware of Iraq's political and economic weight, and that the attempts to isolate it do not mean that it will go away. That is why it is bent on beleaguering Iraq by exterminating its people and interfering in its domestic affairs.

The paper adds: Eventually, the European states realized that the U.S. conduct is a big impediment to their survival and development, and that Iraq constitutes a big economic market, not to mention the fact that it is a factor of stability in the region and the world at large.

The paper concludes its article by saying that the Europeans have actually realized that Iraq is immune to U.S. imperialist and Zionist plots, and that the Americans are harboring impossible and sick dreams. The paper notes that the next few days will witness a large-scale Western campaign condemning the U.S. conduct as a factor of discord within the world body, a factor that violates international conventions and the rules of international conduct.

Commentaries, Statements View Albright's Tour

AL-THAWRAH: U.S. Political 'Isolation' Seen

JN0103100995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0715 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has stressed that the unmistakable Iraqi right has driven the U.S. Administration into a state of political isolation. It cannot escape this by using the veto, now that its false allegations and falsehoods to extend the embargo imposed on Iraq have failed.

Today, in an article published under the headline "Washington's Isolation and Failure," the paper says: Using the veto, which the U.S. Administration has always used unfairly, will provide brazen evidence that the Iraqi right and the Iraqi leadership's and people's adherence to that right, despite the high price they pay everyday, has placed the U.S. Administration in complete political isolation.

The paper adds: With Albright's arrogant statement, the United States is not threatening just Iraq, but also threatens the entire world. It realizes the continuation of the embargo against Iraq is now a direct threat to the interests of several leading states in the world, some of whom are permanent members of the UN Security Council, and serves only the economic, political, and oil interests of Washington and Tel Aviv.

The paper says this U.S. threat confirms that the White House's tight control over the destiny of the international politics is diminishing. Certain states, which were principal members of the coalition against Iraq, have now become convinced, although late, that their national interests dictate that they should refuse to remain mere tools in U.S. hands.

The paper says: Washington's threat to use the veto if a request is made to the UN Security Council to lift the embargo imposed on Iraq is a clear indication that the U.S. Administration has exhausted all its weapons in feverish and persistent attempts and failed to isolate and chain Iraq and abort the pan-Arab awakening plan. Iraq initiated this plan and had begun to establish its material bases. The embargo is the ugliest of these U.S. weapons.

The paper adds that the steadfastness of the valiant Iraqi people has confirmed to the world the power of virtue which Iraq has. It has also proved that evil will inevitably fail. President Saddam Husayn was right when he said that "the embargo is the weapon of the impotent and the resources that God almighty bestowed on the Iraqis, in term of their huge natural resources and their real wealth—the new Iraqi individual—will make the embargo one day something of the past and another chapter in Iraq's rich militant [jihadiyah] experience.

AL-THAWRAH concludes its article by saying that the Iraqi people's steadfastness, and the fact that they tolerated the suffering with patience and dignity, has made the world regain its senses and made several states in the world start considering their interests away from the U.S. and Zionist designs. The veto cannot suppress the Iraqi people's right to a dignified free life, since a dignified stand means life itself.

Writer: Tour Confirms U.S. Hostility

JN0103115095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0810 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Mar (INA)—An Iraqi political commentator has said the U.S. Administration's persistent and intransigent positions on the issue of lifting the embargo imposed on Iraq stem from an undeclared political motive, which can only be realized by conspiring against Iraq's nationalistic regime.

In an article published by AL-'IRAQ today, Nuri al-Marsumi says: The U.S. Administration is conspiring against Iraq in the cheapest possible ways. It recruits idle, failure mercenaries who were rejected by the homeland by shallow, exposed, and failed means. It wagers on spending $30 million to infringe on Iraq and its regime.

The writer adds: The U.S. Administration will lose its wager because its cards are exposed. Its motives in the northern part of the country—in the so-called secure zone, the nature of whose security is known by our Kurdish people—are also exposed. In the south, those who infiltrate from abroad fall at the hands of the faithful men. Therefore, its motives and reasons are exposed throughout Iraq.

The writer says the new U.S. move, represented by U.S. envoy Albright's tour, is an attempt to abort current efforts at the UN Security Council and the forthcoming periodic review to implement Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687. It is also intended to confuse the UN Security Council members so they will not know why the embargo is maintained and if it is an end in itself or a means of pressure to achieve certain demands.

The writer stresses that the U.S. President's decision to send his envoy Albright on a tour confirms U.S. hostility toward Iraq and its interests. He says this hostility will not end unless Iraq implements all demands, regardless of how large or small they might be. This is confirmed by Albright's statement that her administration will not agree to end the embargo even if UN Special Commission Chairman Ekeus submits a positive report.

In his article, al-Marsumi voices his distaste for this U.S. Administration's aggressive trend and failed wager, which will only bring it further disappointments and scandals. This is because Iraq does not yield to the foreigner and because the Iraqi people will not relinquish their homeland or leader, the pioneer of their modern renaissance.

The writer concludes his article by stressing that the various countries understand where their own interests are, and that the time will come when no one will hear the shouting of the U.S. envoy at the UN Security Council. These countries, the writer adds, will act in accordance with their own interests, choices, right, and justice. Conspiratorial attempts and the recruitment of mercenaries will not work with a strong and resolute regime such as that of Iraq.

BABIL Terms Tour 'Evil New U.S. Maneuver'

JN0103102495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Mar (INA)—BABIL has warned against the evil new U.S. maneuver which aims to shuffle cards, distort facts, and deceive the world.

In an editorial today, the paper says: What U.S. Envoy Madeleine Albright has stated during her visit to Prague, as part of her feverish tour, is an exposed deception designed to divert the world's attention to other subjects.

The paper adds that the United States has found out that the tendency inside and outside the UN Security Council leans toward a thorough review of the embargo, which has become a way to destroy not only Iraq and its people, but also the world and humanity as a whole. Therefore, the United States is trying through its envoy to say it is prepared to discuss the possibility of amending the sanctions by imposing new and more evil conditions that are even harsher than those stipulated in the sanctions resolutions and Resolution 687.

The paper stresses that the new U.S. trend is intended to obstruct the growing international position that calls for lifting the embargo imposed on Iraq. It is an evil attempt to change the trend and maintain the embargo via new forms and formulas.

The paper concludes by saying that this attempt, driven by evil spirits, will not obstruct the march of crossing to the better. The Iraqis, who displayed patience and sacrifice in the past five years, will resist this new conspiracy, which will fail like all previous conspiracies.

Envoy: Tour Shows Pressure To Lift Embargo

JN0103122295 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1100 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, New York, 1 Mar (INA)—Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations, has stressed that the current tour by U.S. Envoy Madeleine Albright confirms the pressure facing the U.S. Administration as a result of the fact that the majority of UN Security Council members recognize the need to lift the embargo imposed on Iraq.

In statements to journalists at the UN Press Club in New York last night, Hamdun said most UN Security Council members have voiced their sympathy with Iraq and feel Iraq has fulfilled all of its commitments in accordance with the Council resolutions and that the time has come to either lift the embargo as a whole or lift it partially.

He noted that if the UN Security Council resorts to a secret ballot, Iraq will have a majority of votes to lift the embargo. He said the United States' threat to use the veto reflects U.S. blackmail at the council as well as its confusion in the face of the will of the majority of UN Security Council members.

Ambassador Nizar Hamdun said the United States' use of the veto to block lifting the embargo imposed on Iraq will reflect weakness in the position of a superpower and that it will not be easy for a country such as the United States to resort to such a method.

The Iraqi envoy to the United Nations ridiculed allegations of human rights violations in Iraq. He said such allegations are made by certain people every now and then. The reality is that the Iraqi Government has decided to resort to harsh methods to face crime, which is growing because of the continued embargo against the Iraqi people, and these measures are temporary.

He stressed that contrary to what has been said, it is not in Iraq's interest to conceal any documents concerning its previous armament programs. He said Iraq has offered all it can in this regard and that there is reason to delay submitting the required papers, which the Iraqi experts are rewriting. He said these documents were destroyed in a big fire at the institution in which the documents were kept.

Hamdun added that Iraq expects that the UN Security Council consultations in March and April will come up with a positive recognition of Iraq's cooperation. He said the majority of council members have informed Iraq of their stands that call for lifting the blockade as a whole or at least partially, given that the Special Commission will announce in April that the monitoring system is in full swing.

On relations between Iraq and Turkey, Hamdun said: These are normal relations, but Turkey can establish better relations with Iraq if it reconciles its interests with conditions in northern Iraq, the security problems in the region, and the continuation of the sanctions.

Hamdun pointed out that Turkey can resort to Article 50 of the UN Charter and open the Iraqi oil pipeline. It can stop the illegal flights of U.S. aircraft over northern Iraq—flights which have no connection with any UN Security Council resolution.

Concluding, Iraq's UN Ambassador said Iraqi authorities informed the U.S. State Department more than a year ago that they had information pertaining to the World Trade Center Explosion in New York, in order to help U.S. justice. He said Iraq received no positive official answer from the United States. The offer is still valid if Iraq is dealt with on the basis of mutual respect.

Reportage on Zhirinovskiy, Russian Delegation Visit

Zhirinovskiy: Sanctions Cause Russian Losses

JN2802135695 Baghdad INA in English 1050 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Feb. 28, INA—President of [Russian] Liberal Democratic Party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said that Russia's economy sustained heavy losses estimated at billions of dollars because of the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq since August 1990.

In a statement exclusive to AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper published today, Mr. Zhirinovskiy said that great opportunities had been lost by Russian firms and workers as a result of the ongoing sanctions.

The Russian politician appealed to world peoples and the humanitarian organizations to quickly and effectively move for the lifting of the sanctions, stressing that these peoples are now paying cost of the U.S. unilateralism.

The interests of the peoples lie in the regional cooperation and rejecting the approach of hegemony and one pole, Zhirinovskiy said.

Ba'th Party Official Meets Zhirinovskiy

JN2802154895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1451 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 Feb (INA)—Dr. 'Abd-al- Razzaq al-Hashimi, director of the Foreign Relations Bureau at the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, today met with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party [LDP] and head of the LDP bloc at the Russian Parliament, and his accompanying delegation.

The director of the Ba'th Party's Foreign Relations Bureau referred to the importance of the delegation's visit in bolstering the relationship between the two friendly parties and countries.

He called for adopting a new practical formula to promote party and bilateral relations between Iraq and Russia in view of Russia's basic role in world political decisionmaking.

Zhirinovskiy stressed that the Russian people harbor great respect and appreciation for President Saddam Husayn and the people of Iraq. He noted the importance of promoting relations with Iraq and expanding the joint bilateral channels in the service of the interest of the two friendly countries. He said that his party will do all it can to help lift the blockade imposed on Iraq and its people. He commended the profound relations between Iraq and Russia.

ASBP, Russia's LDP Sign Accord

NC2802221995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2100 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 Feb (INA)—The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP] and the Russian Liberal Democratic Party [LDP] today signed a working program for cooperation.

Sa'di Mahdi Salih, member of Iraq Command of the ASBP, signed for the ASBP, and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the LDP, signed for his party.

The program organizes relations of cooperation between the two parties over the next two years, coordination in regional and international forums, and exchange of visits and party delegations.

The program says the two parties will work to lift the economic blockade imposed on Iraq.

The signing ceremony was attended by Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hashimi, director of the Foreign Relations Office at the ASBP Iraq Command.

Zhirinovskiy Leaves; Satisfied With Visit

NC2802220995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2105 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 Feb (INA)—Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party, has expressed deep satisfaction with the results of his visit to Iraq and his meeting with President Saddam Husayn.

He told INA before leaving Baghdad for home tonight that Iraq's steadfastness against the aggression, in both its military and economic aspects, yielded a decisive fact; namely, that victory is inevitably for the Iraqis.

He said that during his visit and talks with the Iraqi officials, he saw the great achievements of the Iraqi people in an exceptionally short time, and he sensed the resolve of the Iraqis and their determination to continue to struggle until they score full victory.

He stressed that his party supports Iraq in its just struggle to achieve its legitimate objectives. He called on all states and international and humanitarian organizations to contribute effectively to lifting the blockade against Iraq and ending the suffering of its people.

*Saddam Husayn Praised for Hitting Israel With Missiles

95LH0079 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 11 Jan 95 pp 1, 2

[Article by Salah al-Mukhtar from the Viewpoint Column: "They Are Firing the 40th Missile"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It has been only a few days since our great leader Saddam Husayn wondered, "Who will fire the 40th missile?" There was a flood of replies that gladdened the heart and soothed the feelings of the families of the thousands of Arab martyrs who died for Palestine, for their families were frightened and their souls trembled as they saw the Zionists infiltrating here and there.

With unbounded bitterness, the souls of thousands of Iraqi and Arab martyrs ask us: What has happened? Were we martyrs for nothing? Were we wrong when we demanded the liberation of Palestine and the expulsion of the imperialists? Was the history of half a century filled with Arab blood and suffering a total illusion? Is Shylock, whom we now see kissing the Arabs' cheeks, closer to them than 'Abdallah, who is dying in Iraq because of the sanctions, or Muhammad, assassinated by American bullets in beloved Algeria?

The souls of these martyrs are angry and speak with a voice like thunder: "For whose sake were we martyred? Was it not for Haifa, Jaffa, Safad, and other cities? The cemetery of the martyrs of Iraq in Janin was not established before the occupation of the West Bank or Gaza but before that. So why do we wear our enemies' garb and adopt his mentality, and accept his will to rule over us? Is this not a total denial of self-respect and humanitarian honor and clear self-hatred? Where is the manliness of Arabs capable of challenges? Where is the wisdom of pure Arabs, and their nobility?"

In the Mother of Battles, we knew that we had become the conscience of all Arab martyrs, which is why 250 million Arabs, and hundreds of millions of Muslims, rallied around our Commander Saddam Husayn, for everyone knew he was the symbol of the honor that some sought to defile, of the principles they were planning to assassinate, and the rights they frenziedly sought for us to abandon. The 39 Iraqi missiles fired by the greatest man of his time, and the hero of all epochs, at the aggressive invader squatting in Palestine's occupied land, said: "No! Our martyrs have not died in vain. Their cause will remain living until the land is restored and national honor is upheld."

The sounds of the al-Husayn and al-'Abbas missiles reawakened slumbering awareness, and manhood which had surrendered. The martyrs in God's heavens were delighted as they saw one of their dearest wishes realized, to prove that the Zionist occupiers are nothing but cowardly rats unable to confront authentic Arabs who have liberated their minds and bodies, as happened in the Iraq of Saddam Husayn.

This is why they wanted to assassinate 'Abdallah, and 'Abdallah's children, and exterminate the descendants of Muhammad, peace be upon him, by destroying Iraq with sanctions and encircling it with death. Criminal crusader capitalism has killed a million Iraqis, and is now annihilating thousands of Algerians who are Muhammad's descendants, and wants to murder our bride, Palestine, to defile her purity and virginity with known names to hide the name of Shylock, who smiles gently and sincerely as he circles, and the rabid wolf when he gains power.

Today the victor over imperialism and the crusaders stands ready to conquer Zionist AIDS, to slap American imperialism after more than 15 years of the shame, starvation, oppression, and systematic plundering to which it has subjected our brother, beloved Egypt. But the noble descendants of the pharoahs, the offspring of Yemeni Arab 'Abdallah, and with them the Copts, with all the majesty of the Messiah, have reaffirmed that Egypt has never and will never accept normalization.

A historical decree was published, despite the oppression of ugly America, signed by Egypt's top intellectuals, artists, trade unionists, and party leaders, announcing the formation of a preparatory committee to act to confront all forms of Zionist control and normalization with the Zionist entity in the name of peace. Before that, Coptic Orthodox Patriarch Pope Shanudah III proclaimed the Coptic Church's rejection of normalization with the Zionist entity, and he interdicted visits to Jerusalem as long as it remains occupied.

This stand, and its reaffirmation now, is the practical response to America's calls that resistance is futile and that peace with Zionism is inescapable. This comprehensive Egyptian response confirms that the first and gravest experiment in normalization has failed, despite the passage of much time and the changes in plans and leaders. The Egyptian people of all communities are still faithful to their Arabism, Islam, and Christianity, and the mechanisms of normalizations are merely cheap goods that have rusted and now must be thrown away.

From the depths of Palestine, despite all setbacks and sufferings, the Palestinian people have spoken clearly. The children of the stones have grown up and their stones have become the weapons with which they confront the Zionists' weapons, for violence must be answered with violence, and Palestinian honor is up to all challenges, and the Palestinian National Charter is still stronger than the interpretations, abolition, and rewriting.

There was a poll conducted in occupied Palestine, which demands an end to negotiations with the Zionist entity. From the heart of wounded Syria, a Syrian voice is raised in determined and thunderous response to the regime of Hafiz al-Asad, who has dared to conduct official and open negotiations in which one of the most prominent figures in the Syrian regime, Hikmat al-Shihabi, has participated. Syria's ambassador to Turkey has totally refused to shake the hand of the ambassador of the Zionist entity in Turkey, and he has decided to relinquish his designation as dean of the diplomatic corps in Turkey in order that he not be compelled to shake the hand of the Zionist ambassador.

Thus we see that the Arabs are no longer narcotized, oblivious, or apathetic, for the period of shock is ended, and it has been contained. 'Abdallah the Iraqi and Muhammad the Algerian and Ahmad the Syrian and Hasanayn the Egyptian, and all the Arabs in every Arab country, with the whole Islamic world behind them, have launched the 40th missile.

The public Egyptian popular rejection of normalization with the Zionist entity, both peaceful and armed, is the engine of the 40th missile; Palestinian rejection of peace is the explosive fuse of the 40th missile; and the Syrian popular response, expressed in the statements of Syria's ambassador to Turkey, comprises the wings of the 40th missile. The body of the 40th missile and the electronic brain guiding it, this is the beginning of the glorious crossing movement in Iraq, the success of the Iraqi people's steadfastness, and the genius and wisdom of the man of unique historic missions, Saddam Husayn, in smashing the foundations of the blockade.

O Arabs, O Muslims: Look up at the skies of your countries and lift up your heads; hold your heads higher than any summit in the world, for you have become the legion that will save the world. Only you have said "no" to America's attempts to colonize the world, so that American imperialism was defeated before it could establish itself. It is you who said "no" to Zionism, and the Middle East Order project failed before it was born, while Arab nationalism remained and glorious Islam was saved.

Look up into the skies. The 40th missile is passing above right now, and the remote control is in the hand of an engineer of the lineage of Muhammad: His name is Saddam Husayn.

Look ahead, and see every major country in the world. You will see that America is facing rejection, hatred, and armed resistance. You will see Russia rising and France awakening, and Japan and Germany taking their revenge on America in their own way. Look at world Zionism, and you will see that it is wounded and wary, and now facing a new world which, for it, is more like a jungle than a city. It no longer knows where to turn; it has lost its instruments of central control here and there. So now Shylock has gone back to his true nature: gathering crumbs now that the banquet is over.

Our age has begun. The smile of Saddam Husayn looks down from the great capitals of the world.

So tighten your belts, and put on your flak jackets, for the 40th missile is about to land, and shake the region and the world.

CNN Report on Agreement With Syria Refuted

Sources 'Surprised' by Report

TA0103054495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In an exclusive report released last night, the U.S. cable network CNN said Israel and Syria are negotiating an agreement on the establishment of demilitarized zones between them on the Golan and which will also include an exchange of ambassadors. [passage omitted]

Israeli sources were surprised by the report. According to them, it may be a Syrian attempt to paint a rosy picture in anticipation of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's arrival in the region. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz was told that the report negates everything Israel has learned recently and rehashes issues already broached in the negotiations, unless it is referring to a channel of contacts designed to bypass Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, the senior Jerusalem sources said in wonder.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 1 March carries a related report by Washington correspondent Arye Golan, adding that "Israeli sources in Washington stressed that no negotiations are currently being conducted with Syria."]

Peres Denies Report

TA0103063095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Karmit Gay and Shlomo Raz; place not given—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Gay] Good morning, Mr. Peres. Are you one of those surprised by the CNN report and its contents?

[Peres] I am not very surprised. I know that Syria has made similar remarks to the media in the past. It may be that Syria is the source or that some journalist came up with the report, but it is certainly not a result of negotiations between us and Syria.

[Gay] So what is the issue in terms of content?

[Peres] Look, the content is not binding just because it was given to some media source. These are not negotiations, which, as you well know, are always different from background remarks made on or off the record in some mixed up and confused way. The main fact is that, so far, no negotiations with Syria have been resumed and no new proposals have been placed on the table. This is why it may be a trial balloon or a figure of speech. In any event, it certainly is not binding and is not an issue that was placed on the negotiating table as it should have been.

[Gay] Are you referring to the manner or to the contents?

[Peres] I am referring to the content as well; it is not binding. If it was reported to CNN or anybody else, it is binding on CNN and on the party that made the statement, but it does not obligate the Syrian Government. I would not like to address myself to media speculations.

[Raz] Do you mean that you do not know firsthand that an agreement was reached on an exchange of ambassadors?

[Peres] No. First of all, I know that no negotiations are being held at this time. This is the main thing. Therefore, everything we may read is about contacts with reporters and such or other sources. It is not a result of negotiations and is not about presenting stands at the table.

[Raz] Do you share the view that Christopher's next visit to the region will not necessarily produce a breakthrough, to say the least?

[Peres] Look, judging from what we know so far, there are no indications of any Syrian readiness to opt for a breakthrough. I would welcome pleasant surprises, and I am very much in favor of Secretary Christopher's visit to the region, because peace should be dealt with constantly. It is not a matter of moods; neither is it not a matter of speculation. Hard work is being invested in this, and so it should be. I very much appreciate the fact that the U.S. secretary of state is lending his hand to this effort. Certainly, on our part, we would like to reach a permanent agreement with the Syrians.

[Gay] Does it mean that you do not share the CNN belief that a draft agreement with Syria can be drawn up soon?

[Peres] I do not share this view because, as I said, it is more in the nature of a media revelation than a political breakthrough.

[Gay] Thank you, Minister Peres.

Security Said Discussed; No Accord

TA0103083795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reactions in Jerusalem to the CNN report that Israel and Syria are close to reaching an agreement that includes reciprocal security arrangements, demilitarized zones, an arrangement in stages, and the opening of embassies: The prime minister's bureau said that security arrangements were indeed discussed in the meetings between Chiefs of Staff Baraq and al-Shihabi in Washington several months ago, but no agreements were reached. Israel is awaiting the visit by Warren Christopher, who hopes to promote the negotiations between the two countries, our political correspondent Shlomo Raz was told this morning.

According to several political sources in Jerusalem, the CNN report is unfounded and the details it presented are surprising and imprecise. Our correspondent notes that on the issue of reciprocity in security arrangements, Israel rejects the Syrian stand outright.

Settlement Council Rejects Demilitarization of Golan

TA0103064295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning, the Golan Settlements Council rejected the idea of demilitarizing the Golan Heights, as was reported by CNN. Sources in the council told our correspondent Nati Zilberman that the Golan residents are determined to foil the plot to return the Syrians to the shores of Lake Tiberias, even if this is given the pet name of demilitarization.

Peres on Political Separation From Palestinians

TA0103125095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres says the continued existence of Jewish settlements near Arab population centers could lead to the kind of civil strife seen in Bosnia or Yugoslavia. He also said that the proposed separation between Israel and the Palestinians should be political in nature, not economic.

[Begin Peres recording] We do not speak about any material separation. We are not speaking about fences; we are not speaking about walls; we are not speaking about national economies, because this is old-fashioned. So, economically, it will be one envelope that will comprise the Jordanians, the Palestinians, and us, and hopefully other countries as well, but, politically, we do not want to introduce Jewish life in the midst of Arab life, and we do not want to introduce Arab life in the midst of Jewish life, because we think it will not work; it may become a Bosnia, a Yugoslavia.

The idea that we have now added to it is how to build a border between the two parties with a national separation, a political separation, and economic cooperation. And we have again a new idea. Now we want to pave the border between us and the Palestinians alongside the West Bank and alongside the Gaza Strip with a chain of industrial parks, which will provide jobs to the Palestinians and provide jobs to the Israelis. We are planning to install five industrial parks like it alongside the West Bank, three like it alongside the Gaza Strip. If you have been to Venice, I am sure that you remember the bridges over the different canals and on every bridge you have businesses: stores and small workshops. We want to build the border like a Venice bridge. [end recording]

Peres was speaking to American Jewish leaders in Jerusalem.

Meretz Minister Proposes 'Enlarging' Gaza Strip

TA2602062195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minister Shulamit Aloni is proposing enlarging the Gaza Strip by adding territory along the Rafah-Elat border area. Aloni told Qol Yisra'el such a move would reduce overcrowding in the Strip and could help move the peace process forward.

Report Notes Drop in Funding to Northern Settlements

TA0103090895 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 1 Mar 95 p 12

[ITIM report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Several ministries did not fully use budgets intended for northern confrontation line settlements this past year, according to a report by Shim'on Sheves, director-general of the Prime Minister's Office.

Sheves, who also is chairman of the directors-general committee aimed at aiding these settlements, said there had been a significant drop in funding from several ministries last year, strengthening claims made by settlement leaders.

According to Sheves's report, the Defense Ministry invested only NIS [new Israeli shekels] 15.5 million of the NIS 19.9m. earmarked for the settlements.

Sheves and members of the various ministries visited settlements in the Mevo'ot Hermon and Merom Hagalil local councils yesterday, and heard serious complaints about the social and economic situation there.

Sheves ordered representatives of the various ministries to step in to provide individual help to the members of Moshav Dovev and Moshav Avivim. He immediately ordered that a series of allocations be made to area settlements to solve some of their problems.

UN Ambassador Rejects 'Intervention' in Settlement Issue

TA2802172295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The UN Security Council is beginning a debate at this hour on Israeli settlement activity, following a request by the PLO and Arab states. They want the council to call on Israel to stop all construction in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem.

I spoke with Israel's UN Ambassador Gad Ya'aqobi a short while ago about the debate:

[Begin recording] [Ya'aqobi] We hope that the Security Council will not take any resolution on this matter, but it is not so sure now. We say very clearly that the settlement policy that was adopted by the Government of Israel—without any connection to the Declaration of Principles, just by our own initiative—about two and a half years ago, stopped any establishment of new settlements in the West Bank; stopped any allocation of government resources to the enlargement of present settlements; and, about Jerusalem, we will continue to build houses in Jerusalem as the Palestinians are doing.

On the other hand, we will say very clearly that we hope that the whole differences of opinions will be resolved by direct negotiations between the parties, as agreed by the agreements that were signed between the Palestinians and us. If they will be able to combat the terror activities, of course the enhancement of the implementation of the Declaration of Principles will continue without any disturbance.

[Unidentified correspondent] It is also Israel's opinion that differences that do occur in the peace process should be settled in direct negotiations?

[Ya'aqobi] Absolutely. We believe that both parties have to respect their commitments in the Declaration of Principles and in the Cairo agreement which say very clearly that all differences of opinion have to be resolved by the parties in direct negotiations and not by any outside intervention of the United Nations or any other party. This will be, of course, our main argumentation. [end recording]

Police Implement Plan To Safeguard Western Wall Area

TA2802123095 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 28 Feb 95 p 8

[Report by Doron Me'iri]

[FBIS Translated Text] The police have come up with a new plan to safeguard the Western Wall and bring the situation on the Temple Mount under control in the event of riots at the site. This plan totally changes the measures that have been in force to date.

Until now, the police have avoided entering the Temple Mount at all costs, even in the event of serious riots, such as the one that followed the Cave of the Patriarchs massacre a year ago, in which thousands of Muslims hurled a barrage of stones at the Western Wall court for many hours while the police refrained from storming the Temple Mount.

In the wake of the criticism sparked by that incident, Police Commissioner Asaf Hefetz and Jerusalem District Commander Arye 'Amit worked out a new plan. This plan calls for a massive presence of elite police forces in the mosques area in order to combat disturbances by a quick and controlled evacuation of the tens of thousands of worshipers using a loudspeaker system and escape routes.

The new plan was implemented last weekend, during the two prayers ending the Ramadan month. Dozens of members of the antiterror unit and hundreds of special patrol unit members who specialize in quelling demonstrations and riots were deployed among the tens of thousands of worshipers. This move was not coordinated with the waqf, but the fear that the presence of these forces would ignite the situation proved unfounded.

A decision was taken against arming the special forces with firearms out of fear of an escalation that would result in many casualties. The police have also received an unequivocal order not to use force without clear authorization from the political echelon.

Shahaq on Lebanon 'Blockade,' Gaza Arms Caches

TA2802164395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq said that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has not imposed a naval blockade on Lebanon, but is only detaining vessels for security reasons. In a briefing to the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Lieutenant General Amnon Shahaq also noted that the level of cooperation between Hizballah and the Palestinian organizations has increased.

Reacting to Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah's accusations regarding the Israeli shelling of south Lebanese settlements, the chief of staff said that the IDF had only retaliated against the sources of fire. The chief of staff, nevertheless, admitted that mistakes had been made in the past in which civilians were wounded. Shahaq stressed that IDF commanders at all levels know their orders prohibit the shelling of civilian settlements.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 28 February adds that "Shahaq said that mines and ammunition caches, including 500 kg of TNT explosives, had recently been discovered in Gaza on three different occasions. The chief of staff also said that according to the most recent figures, there are approximately 6,000 registered weapons in the Gaza Strip. These weapons are now being held by the Palestinian Police."]

Coordination With Jordan on U.S. Debt Aid Reported

TA0103112995 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 1 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Hillel Kuttler and David Makovsky]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Israel and Jordan are coordinating efforts to assure that US debt assistance to Amman goes through as planned.

Ambassadors Itamar Rabinovich and Fayiz al-Tarawinah have begun meeting on the matter, Israeli officials in Washington said yesterday.

"We think the Jordanian contribution to the peace process is important," one official said. "We're not only talking about the importance of the assistance to Israeli-Jordanian peace, but also the fact Jordan is a strategic asset to the US. We're making an effort to concretize what's been promised to them."

The official held out the possibility that Rabinovich and al-Tarawinah would meet jointly with congressional appropriations committees to make their case. [passage omitted]

Envoy to Israel To Assume Duties Early Mar

JN0103095695 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 1 Mar 95 p 1

[Report by Nasir 'Arif]

[FBIS Translated Text] Next week, the Foreign Ministry is expected to finalize necessary technical arrangements in order to officially start work at the Jordanian Embassy in Israel. This comes after a royal decree was issued appointing Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir as Jordan's ambassador to Israel.

In an exclusive statement to AL-ASWAQ, Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said work has begun to finalize the embassy's budget and to appoint the Jordanian staff who will work in it. The embassy's staff is expected to be between 20 to 25 employees, including seven diplomats.

Asked when he will assume his duties as ambassador, al-Mu'ashshir said: I expect to leave Amman for Israel in early March accompanied by the embassy's staff in order to officially start work at the Jordanian Embassy in Israel.

Foreign Ministry Plans Israeli Affairs Section

JN0103112295 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 1 Mar 95 p 4

[Report by Nabil al-Ghazzawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to a question by AL-DUSTUR, Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti said that so far the Foreign Ministry has not yet opened a section for Israeli affairs. He noted that such a section will be opened in the near future, just like other sections for sisterly Arab countries and friendly foreign countries which have diplomatic representation in Jordan.

In response to another question, 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti said he hoped that through its contacts and negotiations with the Israeli side, sisterly Syria will be able to achieve comprehensive and total Israeli withdrawal from all of its occupied territories to the 4 June 1967 borders, on which the Israeli forces stood.

In another development, an authorized Jordanian government source said in response to a question by AL-DUSTUR that Jordan and Israel so far have not signed any agreement on defining the territorial waters between the two countries. He said reports by Israeli newspapers and by news agencies citing Israeli newspapers are untrue and baseless. He noted that the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement stipulates that the territorial waters between the two countries will be defined within nine months after signing the Jordanian- Israeli agreement.

King 'Very Pleased' With Course of Peace With Israel

TA0103120795 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 1 Mar 95 p 19

[Report on "special interview" with King Husayn by Smadar Peri in Amman on 28 February]

[FBIS Translated Text] "If I were to sum up the four months that have passed since we signed the peace accord, I would definitely say that the agreement is taking shape and that I am very pleased. There are no problems. Everything we agreed would happen between us has taken place, and both sides are honoring their commitments."

In a special interview to YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Amman yesterday, King Husayn expressed optimism about the way the peace accord between Israel and Jordan is being translated into practice. "I see no special difficulties in the network of ties being built between our countries. My recent meeting with Prime Minister Rabin was good. What we agreed on is happening, and everything we decided is taking place. I cannot point to differences of opinion or difficulties in our relations.

"We have gone through quite a lot since we signed the agreement," King Husayn added. "The border was demarcated, the committees are meeting, and cooperation agreements are being drafted. The work continues in each of the fields covered by our peace treaty."

I asked King Husayn whether Jordan has found any special problems in Israel's implementation of the agreement. King Husayn responded with a wide smile: "I am pleased. There are no problems. I believe both we and you in Israel have a sense of security after so many lost years."

Nevertheless, the monarch's optimistic remarks contained a hint about the need for economic aid: "Even if we do not ask for a prize for what has been achieved, I believe we now must act to improve the quality of life of our people. We must defend the peace and prove that it is the right way."

"We are totally committed to peace," King Husayn stressed in an unequivocal tone.

King Husayn 80 members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations at his palace in Amman yesterday. He reiterated to them Jordan's commitment to peace with Israel and they, for their part, made a commitment to try to get Capitol Hill to write off Jordan's foreign debt to the United States and to secure foreign aid for new economic projects in Jordan.

King Husayn will meet with President Clinton in Washington in three weeks.

Expelled PA Policeman Refused Entry

JN2802115095 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 95 p 3

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan on Monday [27 February] refused to accept a Palestinian security officer whom Israel wanted to expel to the Kingdom across the King Husayn Bridge, and the fate of the man remained unclear.

Israeli media reported that Muhammad Jamil al-'Isawi, a member of the Palestinian police force in autonomous Gaza Strip and Jericho, was brought to the bridge across the Jordan River on Monday, but that the Jordanian government refused to allow him entry.

No comment was immediately available from Jordanian authorities on the affair late Monday. It was believed that the man remained on the Israeli-controlled side of the King Husayn Bridge crossing.

Officials have said in the past that Jordan would not let Israel deport Palestinians to Jordanian territory. This Jordanian stand prompted Israel to turn to Lebanon as the dumping ground for expelled Palestinians.

Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan 'Umar al-Khatib said Jordan had informed Israel that it would not accept the policeman.

"The Israelis should hand him over to the Palestinian (national) Authority" [PNA; Palestinian Authority, PA] in Gaza and Jericho, Mr. al-Khatib told the Jordan Times. "Jordan has nothing to do with the man."

Ahmad Quray', minister of economy in the PNA, described the Israeli attempt to expel the man to Jordan as a violation of the autonomy accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Mr. al-'Isawi was arrested by Israeli security forces on Jan. 16 at a military checkpoint between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

According to PLO officials quoted in agency reports from occupied Jerusalem, Mr. al-'Isawi was carrying a forged identity card and was suspected by Israel of attacking alleged Palestinian collaborators.

Israel believed that Mr. al-'Isawi arrived in the Gaza Strip with a forged identity along with the thousands of Palestinian policemen who entered the territory in May last year when the Mediterranean strip and Jericho went under Palestinian autonomy, the reports said.

Mr. al-'Isawi, a leading PLO security officer, is suspected of involvement in attacks on Israelis before the 1993 Israeli-PLO autonomy accord, Israeli security sources quoted by Reuter said.

They said Mr. al-'Isawi is suspected of entering the Gaza Strip under a false name and involvement in armed attacks against Israel.

Israel says Mr. al-'Isawi, who once served on PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's elite force 17, later joined a more militant wing of Mr. 'Arafat's Fatah movement known as the Western Sector, which is blacklisted by Israel.

Security sources said Israel had turned down a request by the Palestinian National Authority to let 400 members of the force, now residing in Jordan, return to the self-rule areas.

Palestinian officials had said after Mr. al-'Isawi's arrest that his expulsion could set a bad precedent for thousands of other PLO officials now living in Gaza and Jericho.

Thousands of PLO fighters, retrained as policemen, returned to police the self-rule areas after Israel handed them over to the PN last May.

Israeli radio said Israel refused an offer from the Palestinian Authority to take him into the self-rule areas.

The army refused to confirm or deny the report.

The radio did not specify the charges held against Mr. al-'Isawi.

Colonel Jibril al-Rajub, secret police chief in the self-rule enclave of Jericho, denied Mr. al-'Isawi was a member of the Palestinian police force and said he entered the territories on a tourist visa.

A senior Jordanian official said later Saturday: "I can confirm that this man neither crossed the bridge yesterday nor today (Monday)."

"On top of that, we were neither approached by the Palestinians nor by the Israelis on the subject," Reuter quoted the official as saying.

Paper: U.S.-Israeli Alliance 'Danger' to Peace

JN2502091795 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Feb 95 pp 1, 25

[Editorial: "The Peace Process and the U.S.-Israeli Alliance"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A host of currently disputed Arab-Israeli issues shows that the peace process in the region has not had much effect on the principles of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East or the constants of the Israeli policy, which aims to place the Arab world under U.S.-Israeli control.

The Israeli military escalation, the siege of Sidon in south Lebanon, the continuation of the Israeli occupation, and the stalemate reached on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks are all parts of a situation that Washington refuses to open for discussion at the Security Council so that a solution based on international legitimacy and its establishments could be reached. It also refuses to put its weight behind changing this situation through playing the role of "honest" meditator and "full" partner in the current peace process.

Washington also refuses to play this role, which is supposed to be part of its sponsorship of the peace process, in the Egyptian-Israeli dispute on the signing of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Washington also refuses to practice its role in ending the dilemma reached by the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, and at the same time refuses to give the Security Council a chance to discuss such an effort.

Washington rejects lifting the siege imposed on Iraq and besieges the Security Council to prevent it from playing its role of returning Iraq to the international and Arab community and defusing a major hotbed of tension in our region and entrenching a peaceful atmosphere.

The continuation of the U.S.-Israeli strategic alliance after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the Middle East peace process has lost its justification. It has no pretext other than a tendentious intention to place the region under U.S.-Israeli hegemony, monopolize strategic superiority, and impose a peace according to the conditions dictated by this monopoly and superiority to prevent international legitimacy and its establishments from practicing any role in the region.

This is a serious danger threatening the peace process itself. It is time to change the rules of the U.S.-Israeli game in the region.

Paper on Peace Process 'Gridlock,' U.S. Efforts

JN2502102195 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic
25 Feb 95 p 19

[Editorial: "New Round of U.S. Mediation Efforts"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The new round of U.S. mediation efforts that will begin next month on two levels is important in light of the series of difficulties the peace process faces between the Arabs and Israel.

So far, and in spite of all the good intentions and gestures of goodwill demonstrated by the concerned Arab parties, the Israeli policy of procrastination, which has been its hallmark for a long time, continues to be a huge obstacle to the acceleration of steps toward peace, which should be just as, if not more, important to Israel as they are to the concerned Arab parties.

Certainly the special U.S. envoy, Dennis Ross, who is expected to arrive in the region soon to prepare for the visit by U.S. Secretary of State Christopher, will have a great deal of information on the reasons for the problems facing the negotiations on the Palestinian track and the stalemate on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, and on the Jordanian position on peace after the signing of the peace treaty, which the Jordanians insist and will continue to insist is a step within the steps of all concerned Arab parties leading to just, comprehensive, and lasting peace, and development based on the equal rights of all peoples of the region to work for improving their economic conditions and make up for the past decades of draining and low production.

The U.S. Administration's decision to upgrade the level of new contacts with Damascus, Tel Aviv, and the Arab parties to the peace process to the level of the secretary of state next month is supposed to be made on the basis of the need to end the problems and gridlock of the negotiations in order to reach the greater objective represented in comprehensive stability in the region and a new order for broad regional cooperation in various fields.

In spite of all the achievements realized so far, which were crystallized at meetings and in statements, studies, and agreements, the real shift toward normal relations among the peoples of the region depends on the size of change Israel shows in its intentions and actions. It is unimaginable for any people to accept normal relations with a party that continues to occupy land, usurp rights, and cause more suffering. Therefore, any progress that may result from the new U.S. efforts next month will serve the peace process as a whole and help implement the agreements that have been signed so far. Without this progress on all tracks, the threat to stability will continue to be more and larger than what has been achieved thus far.

Bankers: Barings Collapse To Have Little Effect

JN2802111595 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
28 Feb 95 p 1, 18

[Report by Lina Kafilyan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordanian bankers said yesterday that the crisis which befell the British investment bank, Barings, will not affect share prices at the Amman stock exchange because its investments in the shares are small although it has sizable presence in Jordan. The bank's collapse will not affect the Jordanian banking system, they say.

Mrs. Anwar Muhammad Yunus, manager of the al-Shumaysani branch of the Amman Bank for Investments, said that the crisis will not affect the financial market in general but will affect certain shares for the Potash Company in a very limited way. The Bank's collapse will have a great effect on Asian markets where investments are greater.

Mrs. Yunus noted that from an economic viewpoint, the effect will be short-lived because people are affected by rumors rather than facts and figures.

Radwan Darwish, deputy director general of the Jordan Investment and Finance Bank, said that he does not believe that the Barings bank crisis will have an effect on the Amman stock exchange because the shares that were bought by Barings were paid by its own agents. They simply gave the information and did not deal with the Amman Stock Exchange as buyers of shares at their own expense but at the expense of others. He added: I do not believe that the market will be affected. The government approvals that were given to investors were issued in the name of the investors and not in in the name of Barings. Moreover, their size and the number of agents is not great by Jordanian standards.

A responsible source in the Arab Jordan Investment Bank said that Barings Bank is an investment and not commercial bank and that its activities in Jordan were confined to gathering information about the Amman stock exchange and bringing in foreign investors from various sectors to invest in the stock market. The Barings crisis has no effect on the agents or the market because the agents came to the Jordanian financial market with no links to Barings. Barings staff are merely intermediaries for agents. Their crisis will have no effect on the agents, the Jordanian financial market, or other Jordanian banks. [passage omitted]

Hizballah's Qasim: Israeli, U.S. Spy Rings To Be Uncovered

NC2802174395 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim has affirmed that the resistance will forge ahead with its program of resisting Israel and Lahd's forces [South Lebanese Army].

During a seminar that Hizballah organized at the Lebanese University branch in Sidon, Qasim pointed out that the Israeli naval blockade will not affect resistance operations and is intended to exert political pressure on Lebanon to make it halt the resistance operations.

Qasim added: In the next few days U.S. and Israeli spy rings will be uncovered. They have been planning to assassinate non-Hizballah Lebanese officials who fill important political posts.

Army Chief Orders Units To Maintain Preparedness

NC2802141495 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Army Commander General Emile Lahhud today inspected the Lebanese Army's forward positions in the south. He gave instructions to the military units to maintain their preparedness to confront any Israeli acts of aggression. He said the army's steadfastness in the south and national unity at home are the main stronghold for protecting national security from any hostile move. He noted that the latest developments, primarily the restrictions on the ports, are the expression of a continuing hostile stance aimed at undermining the domestic front and increasing its burdens. He pointed out that the measures that the army has taken at the crossing points leading to the occupied areas do not affect citizens who were not involved in security issues. These people, he said, are appreciated and honored through their suffering under the occupation. He stressed that what is required at this delicate stage are more sacrifices, vigilance, caution, and the closing of ranks. He noted that the consolidation of security has come a long way and must be safeguarded on every level.

Southern Towns Shelled; Hizballah 'Source' on Clash

NC2802193895 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jabal al-Rafi' hills in Iqlim al-Tuffah were the target of an artillery bombardment from Israeli positions in al-Zaffatah this afternoon. Also about 50 120-mm shells fell on the townships of Shaqra, Bra'shit, Safad al-Battikh, Majdal Silm, and Qabrikha. Many houses in Bra'shit and Shaqra were damaged.

REUTER cited a Hizballah source saying that its fighters clashed this afternoon with a Lahd forces [South Lebanese Army] patrol in the Mlikh area near Jabal al-Rafi' as it was trying to advance outside the occupied border strip.

REUTER cited a Lahd forces source as saying that the clash, which took place in an area between 'Arab Salim and Jabal al-Rafi', resulted in the death of three resistance members.

Voice of the South radio station said this afternoon that the Israeli army and Lahd's forces killed three resistance fighters at the Habbush Bridge, which links al-Nabatiyah with Iqlim al-Tuffah.

Hizballah Radio Reports Israeli Attacks

NC0103091195 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Enemy warplanes carried out mock raids over Iqlim al-Tuffah this morning and were engaged by the Islamic resistance's antiaircraft guns. Helicopters also flew over Haris, Kafra, Yatar, and Sribbin, drawing ground fire.

Zionist helicopters flew at low-altitude over al-Nabatiyah, al-Zahrani, Sidon, Tyre, Bint Jubayl, and Iqlim al-Tuffah shortly after 2000 yesterday. The helicopters attacked a two-story building in Majdal Zun belonging to Hasan Rashid Sa'id. The building was destroyed but no casualties were caused.

Shortly after midnight, the outskirts of Majdal Zun and Wadi al-Sham' came under 81-mm and 120-mm shelling from the enemy post in (al-Hardun). One hour later, the enemy positions in al-Dabshah and 'Ali al-Tahir bombarded the area with 81-mm mortars and raked it with 12.7-mm machine guns, covering the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa.

Shortly after 0630 today, Jabal Sujud came under shelling by 120- mm artillery from the enemy position in al-Rayhan.

The Zionist enemy and his Lahdist agents who carry out daily attacks tried to improve their image yesterday by freeing 27 detainees from al-Khiyam prison. Five others to be released today. [passage omitted]

Information Minister on Israeli 'Seige,' U.S. Stand

JN2802205195 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1950 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Interview with Information Minister Michel Samahah by Antoine Constantine in Beirut; date not given; from the "Panorama" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Constantine] Your Excellency Lebanese Information Minister Michel Samahah: I was planning to ask you first about the visit of a delegation to Beirut. However, the developments in the south require that we first ask about the situation in the south, as the Israeli siege continues and news is coming in day after day that Israel could be planning for some sort of military action. Some people have not even ruled out the possibility that the siege might extend to the outskirts of the capital, Beirut. Are there any developments in this respect? What measures are open to Lebanon to face these developments?

[Samahah] First of all, we are living in a savage international age that employs double standards in implementing international laws and resolutions. Thus, no attention is paid to Arab rights, and Lebanese rights in particular, by implementing Resolution 425 immediately through a comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from the Lebanese territories. Instead, this age allows the Israeli prime minister, along with 13 ministers, to enter our occupied Lebanese south, in a political show to boost the morale of allies who are collapsing in that Israeli-held region and of collaborators who have started to doubt Israel's ability to protect them. This has coincided with the uprising of the Lebanese resistance against occupation and the restoration of Lebanese rights there. The political forces that are present in this foul age are no more than a summer cloud that will eventually dissipate, and rights will be restored. In this context, I do not think that—in spite of all of this—Israel will make a dramatic move to escalate the situation into a full-blown invasion, as happened in the past. This is because Israel paid a heavy price for its previous invasions. After 1982, we remember well what happened to the Likud in Israel, and to Begin in particular. We also know very well how the artillery invasion in the summer of 1993 led to internal and semi-regional and international crises for Israel in the region. This was a basis to cover up what was agreed upon in the dark in Oslo—a separate agreement between Israel and its suburb in Gaza.

Today, however, we are strong, thanks to our unity, our steadfastness, and our contacts with the Arabs, particularly with Syria, as well as our awareness of our rights and those of Syria, and our failure to retreat, and thanks, in particular, to the awareness of our peoples.

Consequently, the causes of the Israeli siege [on southern Lebanese ports] lie in the Israeli impasse in southern Lebanon and in the relationship between the Israeli Government and the Israeli public opinion, as well as in the relationship between Israel and its Palestinian suburbs [reference to Gaza and Jericho] and other suburbs, and in the nuclear arms pact and implementing the international agreements on possessing weapons of mass destruction in the region.

We are confronting this situation with all available diplomatic and media means, and through domestic steadfastness, and by continuing to highlight our rights—through resistance—to regain our territory and express our own will throughout Lebanon, particularly in southern Lebanon.

[Constantine] Your Excellency the Minister, the second question is: Some circles have recently talked a great deal about the fact that the United States is not willing to respond to any Lebanese requests to convene a Security Council session. The reports on the U.S. rejection of such a step came at a time when [U.S.] Secretary of State Warren Christopher is preparing to come to this region. It is not certain whether he will visit Beirut. However, the Lebanese issue will be one of the most prominent issues he will discuss with the leaders of the region. Have there been any contacts with the United States in this regard, or has the request for a Security Council session been totally rejected?

[Samahah] There are continuing Lebanese-U.S. contacts. They focus on the Lebanese request for the United States to act as a real cosponsor of the peace process and not as a cosponsor that has a certain position on Arab rights and that favors a certain approach in the peace process. Hence, the U.S. relationship with the peace tracks at this phase is confused, and we hope that Secretary Christopher's coming visit will be explanatory, if not decisive. However, it will not, apparently, be decisive in light of the statement made by the official spokesman of the U.S. State Department last night.

However, Lebanese and Arabs rights are directly related to the current siege and the violations of both international laws and UN resolutions. During the Israeli prime minister's visit [to southern Lebanon], we had hoped that the United States would denounce this visit. We also believed that the United States, which is sponsoring the peace tracks, would distinguish between right and wrong and between just and unjust, and that it would also realize that an aggression has actually taken place on the ground. Unfortunately, however, the United States did not do this.

Moreover, we believe we have a long way to go with regard to convincing the U.S. interests that terrorism can actually be confronted by returning the rights to their owners and not by striking at the one who embarks on resistance to regain his rights. These men are called terrorists, but terrorism takes place when, after rights have been regained, someone carries out an act of violence just because he likes violence or terrorism.

In fact, we are now a people with much of their will denied in southern Lebanon and with much of their cherished territory in southern Lebanon and in other occupied Palestinian and Syrian territories still occupied. We thus appeal to those who sponsored peace through the Madrid conference to be fair in addressing our rights on the peace tracks, particularly our rights to our territory and to exercise our sovereignty or to resist the occupation of our territory. [passage omitted]

Libyan, French Envoys Comment on Israeli Blockade

NC0103113995 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Continuing the Foreign Ministry's diplomatic contacts to lift the [Israeli] naval blockade of southern shores, Foreign Ministry Secretary General Ambassador Zafir al-Hasan met today with the ambassadors of the Arab group to brief them on Lebanon's stand on the blockade.

After the meeting, Libyan Ambassador 'Ashur al-Furtas spoke in his capacity as the doyen of the Arab diplomatic corps. He said: We listened to the secretary general's thorough briefing on the Israeli naval blockade. Each Arab capital will hold the necessary diplomatic contacts with friendly countries to explain this blockade's hazards, dimensions, and effects on Lebanon.

He added that the blockade is a blatant violation of the principles of international law and aims to pressure Lebanon into submitting to Israel's well-known demands.

After a meeting with Ambassador Zafir al-Hasan, French Ambassador Jean-Pierre La Fonda said they had assessed the ongoing diplomatic action regarding the Israeli blockade. He added that he told the secretary general that the European countries have adopted a unilateral stand to end the unjustified suffering of the Lebanese fishermen. He said civilians should not bear the consequences of any confrontation and added that he had briefed the secretary general on the outcome of France's contacts. He noted that the diplomatic moves should continue.

Israeli Forces Blow Up Former Prime Minister's Palace

NC0103103195 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our military correspondent has learned that the Israeli forces at dawn today blew up [former Prime Minister] Riyad al-Sulh's palace, which is situated between Jisr al-Khardali and Kafr Tibnit, on the pretext that the Resistance used it for its operations.

Beirut Radio Reports U.S. Renewal of Travel Ban

NC0103093195 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] As expected, the United States has renewed the travel ban on Lebanon for another six months. The decision, signed by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, has not surprised Lebanon, even though U.S. statements have confirmed that the security situation is stable. A statement issued by the U.S. State Department statement yesterday admits that there has been an improvement in the security situation in Lebanon in recent years. The statement commends the Lebanese Government for its efforts to curb terrorist threats and to impose the rule of the law throughout the country. However, it says there is need for more work on these problems and looks forward to working with the Lebanese Government to do the necessary steps in this direction.

The statement refers to the security talks between the U.S. and Lebanese Governments on 6 and 7 February, describing the talks as frank and useful for the security situation in Lebanon. The statement expresses continued concern for the safety of Americans in Lebanon. It expresses pleasure at the level of the experts the Lebanese Government sent to the talks and its commitment to serious and effective work. The dialogue now begun is just the first step. It is expected to be a continuous process that will lead to great improvement in the security situation and will put an end to the danger faced by American officials.

Clinton Sends Cable to al-Hirawi on 'Id al-Fitr

NC0103095995 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has received a cable from U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The cable said the blessed 'Id al-Fitr is an occasion to contemplate what has been achieved and the challenges ahead. He added: Lebanon recorded many achievements in 1994 as it sought to restore its normal regional and world standing.

In his name and on behalf of the American people, the U.S. President said he hoped that Lebanon and the Middle East will this year achieve a comprehensive and durable peace in the region.

Buwayz Reacts To Expulsion of Citizens From Zaire

LD2802201895 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Zaire, the prime minister has signed a new expulsion decree: 135 foreigners, most of them Lebanese, are going to have to leave the country. They are accused of being involved, in particular, in the scandal of trafficking in the national currency and in the fraudulent export of diamonds. Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz fears that the dishonesty of a few may have unfortunate consequences for all of his compatriots living in Zaire. He explained this to Dominique de Courcelles:

[Begin Buwayz recording] We understand that the Zairean authorities have grievances against a few, although these grievances should be proven, should be genuine, but what we really do not understand is that the whole of the Lebanese community should be tainted by the actions of individuals, and second, we do not understand why this situation should be linked directly or indirectly with certain political events in the country. We are in contact with some countries that are friends of Zaire, and with the Zaireans themselves with the aim of finding a solution to this problem: France, Belgium, Egypt, in its capacity as OAU [Organization of African Unity] president, and Saudi Arabia, in its capacity as a friend of Zaire, [have been contacted]. So many friendly countries have been made aware of this matter and I hope in any case that President Mobutu will find a just, fair, and humane solution to this situation. [end recording]

Meets With Foreign Envoys

NC0103104495 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Zairean decree has ordered the expulsion of 135 foreigners, mostly Lebanese. The Zairean authorities accused them of being responsible for many economic and financial crimes, in addition to smuggling large amounts of diamonds.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz continues his contacts with ambassadors of a number of countries that might step in to urge the Zairean authorities to reconsider their stand.

[In a related report, Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic at 0630 GMT on 1 March 95 says: "Yesterday Zaire decided to expel 135 foreigners, including 80 Lebanese. Last Friday [24 February], the Zairean authorities decided to expel 84 foreigners, all of them Lebanese.

["A Foreign Ministry source said Lebanon has been informed of Zaire's decision to double the number of Lebanese nationals it will expel from its territory and that the Lebanese Government has stepped up its contacts to prevent the implementation of that decision. The ministry's sources confirmed that Minister Buwayz has held talks with the French, Belgian, Saudi, and Egyptian ambassadors and asked for their governments to intervene with the Zairean authorities to stop the implementation of this decision."]

Press: 'Effective' U.S. Move Needed To Save Peace

JN2502092995 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In their editorials, TISHRIN and AL-THAWRAH discuss U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's upcoming Middle East tour, which will start mid-March. The two papers review the regional atmosphere in light of the intransigent Israeli stands and Israel's arbitrary and hostile practices in the occupied Arab territories and southern Lebanon. The two papers stress that the renewed U.S. political efforts must be effective, and that this effectiveness must be based on the land-for-peace principle and the full withdrawal of Israeli troops to the 4 June 1967 lines.

AL-THAWRAH says: Let us have a look at how Israel is dealing with the set of issues and factors affecting the peace process and at the logic and mentality with which Israel is running the dialogue on peace. Israel wants its policies carried out, and let the world be set ablaze. It does not hesitate to do anything that will achieve its policies.

AL-THAWRAH refers to the Israeli policy on various issues. It says that regarding the nuclear issue, which is a very serious issue directly linked to the future of the conflict, Israel adamantly refuses to sign the treaty. As acknowledged worldwide, Israel possesses 200 nuclear bombs along with the means of delivery to their targets.

Meanwhile, AL-THAWRAH says, Israel sows death and destruction in southern Lebanon every time it is announced that a U.S. official will visit the region. The paper says: As is well known, Israel rejects full withdrawal from the Golan and sets crazy and impossible terms, as if it is the party that owns the territory. It rejected and continues to reject all relevant international resolutions.

AL-THAWRAH asks: What does Christopher have to say? What will he be carrying with him?

Concluding its editorial, the paper stresses that the clear military disparity between Israel and the Arabs does not make it possible to think of a just, comprehensive peace at all. The paper says that there can be no peace under the nuclear terror on which Israel insists.

For its part, TISHRIN stresses that while Syria welcomes U.S. political efforts and effective move to arrive at a just comprehensive peace, it stresses that if peace is meant to be a strategic option, Israel must respond to all its bases and principles. The relevant UN resolutions and the Madrid conference formula must be adopted as a basic and genuine ground for the achievement of a just, comprehensive, balanced, and equal peace.

TISHRIN says: Everyone knows that Syria will accept nothing short of the full restoration of the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon to their Syrian and Lebanese owners. Syria will never accept any Israeli extortion to make it give up a single inch of its territory. Nor will it accept any matter or measure that harms its national and pan-Arab dignity. All the developments resulting from the Israeli insistence on partial and distorted settlements categorically prove that accepting Israeli pretexts and policies does not lead to a just, comprehensive peace or to regional tranquility and stability.

TISHRIN says that international responsibility toward the peace process requires that matters be clarified and specified. Unless the United States exerts a distinguished effort this time, the peace process will be threatened with collapse, thus exacerbating the regional situation.

Press: Israel Could Obstruct Christopher Mission

JN2602083895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH addresses the upcoming tour of the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, which is aimed at activating the peace process and advancing talks on the Syrian-Israeli track of negotiations, saying: An analysis of the positions of both Syria and Israel confirms that the differences between the two sides are still profound. These differences are known to everybody. They are not kept from the public eye in dark lobbies. These differences epitomize the disparity between two positions. Syria has done a great deal to advance the cause of peace. Syria's position is grounded in commitment to the peace initiative. In contrast, Israel has reiterated its refusal to meet the requirements of peace and flouted its disobedience of international legitimacy. These facts have become public knowledge. The U.S. Administration and its secretary of state are well aware of them. Hence, the U.S. secretary of state might find difficulties obstructing his mission in and not outside of Israel, due to its intransigent position, which is opposed to the achievement of just and comprehensive peace in the region.

For its part, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that Israel has demonstrated procrastination, prevarication, and intransigence to evade compliance with the requirements of peace. It has made impossible demands and conditions on the pretext of achieving normalized ties and security in a manner that has shown its desire to dominate the Arab region and make the Arabs capitulate. This runs against the just and comprehensive peace advocated by Syria. Syria has dubbed just and comprehensive peace as the peace of the brave, the peace that would return territories and rights to their lawful owners, and safeguard the interests of all, the paper adds.

AL-THAWRAH goes on to say: By so doing, Israel has held the world community in complete disregard and defied its desire to achieve just and comprehensive peace. Moreover, Israel has run into the efforts of the world community and the United States, which demand complete withdrawal, which is the key to the success of the peace process.

The paper wonders: Will Christopher be bringing anything new in his upcoming tour, something that would cut Israel to size and confirm the credibility of the United States as an honest and influential partner in the peace process, given the U.S. responsibilities in the current age of world changes?

The paper concludes by saying that the success of the U.S. efforts to activate the peace process depends on the U.S. ability to make Israel accept the prerequisites of peace and respond favorably to the demands of international legitimacy. As for Syria, it has welcomed U.S. efforts, and will never be an obstacle to the efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace that is grounded in international legitimacy.

In its commentary, TISHRIN says that the Arabs have responded favorably to the U.S. initiative. Consequently, they took part in the Madrid conference and the Washington talks. Also, they welcomed international envoys and made several proposals to help achieve a just and honorable solution in the region. Israel, on the other hand, has rejected the key elements of the peace initiative, which aimed to establish a just and honorable solution in the region, advancing the security pretext.

The paper wonders whether Israeli security is only achieved by aggression rather than peace. The paper says that this pretext is to be added to the Israeli arrogance, which has gone too far, flouting all principles and conventions of the international community.

The paper warns against the great dangers posed to the prospects of peace due to the aggressive Israeli practices. It also urges peace advocates and peace lovers to undertake moves to deter Israel and make it halt its continuous aggression on Lebanon and change its rejectionist stand, which is obstructing peace initiatives. The paper asserts that Lebanon will not concede a single inch of its territory. As for Syria, it will not halt its support for Lebanon. There will be no peace in the region unless Israel effects complete withdrawal and succumbs to the relevant UN resolutions.

TISHRIN Welcomes Yemeni-Saudi Memo of Understanding

JN2702082595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 27 Feb 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper TISHRIN deals with the memorandum of understanding signed between Yemen and Saudi Arabia to resolve their border dispute and settle all outstanding bilateral issues.

The paper reiterates that the Yemeni-Saudi memorandum of understanding opens a new positive chapter in inter-Arab ties and provides a mechanism for resolving all that could confuse the Arab atmosphere. If anything, the paper maintains, this indicates that the Arabs have the will to awaken, sidestep their marginal and secondary disputes, and close their ranks in the face of external challenges and dangers.

The paper adds: Syria has taken the lead in efforts to close ranks and avert fighting between the Yemeni and Saudi brothers. It has done so because it believes that the Arabs' strength lies in their solidarity and unity, in activating positive and constructive joint efforts, and in defusing disputes to promote pan-Arab security and Arab wellbeing.

TISHRIN goes on to say: The persistent and diligent efforts Syria has made to settle the border dispute between the two fraternal neighboring states of Yemen and Saudi Arabia have produced constructive understanding, cooperation, and dialogue between the two countries. This has yielded a genuine, good, and positive beginning that will have far-reaching and significant implications for the Arab state of affairs. This development will help improve and rectify the current Arab situation.

The paper concludes its commentary by saying: Driven by its pan-Arab responsibilities, Syria will remain anxious to promote all that could clear up Arab differences and safeguard the Arab identity. This spirit was underscored and underlined by the statement issued at the conclusion of the Alexandria summit in conformity with the sublime objectives of the Arab nation, which is facing challenges that require all to demonstrate clear vision, farsightedness, and adherence to a unified pan-Arab stand that ensures the Arab nation's dignity, safeguards its existence, and protects its destiny.

Loan Agreement Signed With Kuwaiti Fund

JN2802205795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Badr Mushari al-Humaydi, director general of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development [KFAED], and the delegation accompanying him at 0915 today.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Subay'i, minister of state for planning affairs, and the Kuwaiti ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting.

The discussions during the meeting dealt with KFAED's role and activities.

A loan agreement was signed between Syria and KFAED at the State Planning Commission today under which the fund will grant Syria a loan of 21.2 million Kuwaiti dinars to be used for the expansion of the Hamah Cement Plant. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Talebans Tell Rabbani: Disarm or Accept 'Attack'

LD2802123095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The new round of talks held between the representatives of Afghan Government and the Taleban group in the city square in the suburb of Kabul ended without yielding any results.

According to our correspondent from Kabul, in the talks the representatives of Taleban have directly called on Borhanoddin Rabbani government to lay down arms or accept the danger of an attack on Kabul. In reaction to that a spokesman for Rabbani, the president of Afghanistan, said, in case of an attack by the Taleban forces, the troops loyal to Rabbani will defend themselves.

Taleban forces that are presently positioned in Chelsatun and Bala Hesar near Kabul, after several round of futile talks with government, are now ready to attack Kabul. Taleban forces demand the responsibility of security of Kabul and the general disarmament.

Fall Capable 'Without Major Resistance'

BK0103081895 Lahore THE NATION HEADLINE NEWS SERVICE in English 0802 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Report by Rahimullah Yusufzai—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PESHAWAR: The military commander of the Taleban has claimed that said his men are capable of taking Kabul in the same way in which they won control of ten Afghan provinces. In an interview with The News in Qandahar in southwestern Afghanistan, Mowlawi Mohammad Akhund argued that Kabul could fall without using much force as those fighting for President Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Mas'ud were fed up of war and were looking for opportunities to defect to the Talebans. "Can you imagine 50 to 60 Taleban who started the uprising in Mewand district only seven months ago growing into a formidable force in control of one-third of Afghanistan's territory? We are convinced all this couldn't be achieved without the blessings of Allah Almighty," he explained. Mowlawi Mohammad, a portly man about 40 years in age, felt the huge, heavily-armed force assembled by Mas'ud to defend Kabul was unnecessary. He said this force had failed to provide protection to the people of Kabul. "With a much smaller force, the Taleban are capable of restoring peace in the Afghan capital as they did earlier in Qandahar, Lashkargah, Qalat, Ghazni and Maydan Shahr," he opined. The Taleban military commander informed that he fought in the Afghan jehad and led his Talebs during battles in Qandahar. "We learnt military strategies in battle. The Afghans are born fighters but the 14-year war taught them military tactics of the highest order," commented Mowlawi Mohammad. "However, I must make it clear that the Taleban fight their battles on the basis of their faith, ignoring the numerical superiority of their enemy," he added. Explaining the Taleban's fighting techniques, Mowlawi Mohammad informed that they prefer to fight at night so that there are fewer human losses and the enemy is able to escape in the dark. He said the Taleban give almost a week to their opponents to enable them to consider surrender, escape or battle. "We try till the very last for reconciliation and peaceful resolution and attack only when we run out of options," he contended.

India

Candidate Murdered; Bihar Voting Rescheduled

BK0103121695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1135 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Bihar assembly poll has been rescheduled.

The Election Commission announced today that the polling in the state will now be held on the 11th, 15th, and 19th of this month. The election was earlier scheduled for the 5th, 7th, and 9th. The commission in its order said the rescheduling has been done to take certain remedial measures to ensure free and peaceful poll, particularly the reinforcement of central paramilitary forces.

Counting of votes for Bihar will be held on the 21st of March. However, the counting of votes in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Orissa will be held on the 11th, while in Arunachal Pradesh on the 15th. Meanwhile, the polling in the Chatra constituency in Bihar has been countermanded following the killing of the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] candidate, Mr. Shantu Das. Mr. Das and his bodyguard were killed last night at Chenari Bazaar by suspected extremists while he was on an election campaign. Five persons were also injured in the incident.

Poll Says 'Elite' Majority Back Nuclear Policy

BK2802140395 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 18 Feb 95 p 8

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Feb. 17 (UNI)—A majority of Indian elite opinion backs the Government policy of keeping the country's nuclear option open in face of possible threats from a nuclear Pakistan and other nuclear powers, a recent survey shows.

Some 57 per cent of those polled supported the official nuclear policy while 33 per cent advocated an outright acquisition of nuclear weapons. Only eight per cent favoured renunciation of nuclear weapons.

The survey carried out by the Delhi-based Marketing and Research Group (MARG) for the John B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, US, involved personal interviews with educated elites in seven Indian cities.

The target sample size of 1,000 consisted of Government civil servants, academicians, scientists, journalists, lawyers, politicians doctors, public and private senior executives, members of the police and armed forces and sports figures.

Respondents who indicated that India should develop nuclear weapons mostly cited threats from a nuclear Pakistan (57 per cent); increased international bargaining power for India (49 per cent) and threats from other nuclear powers (27 per cent) as their reasons.

On the use of nuclear weapons, 44 per cent of all respondents feel that nuclear weapons could never be used. On the other hand, 33 per cent said the use of nuclear weapons would be justified if Pakistan were about to take over Kashmir.

Another 23 per cent said a nuclear response would be appropriate if China were about to overwhelm India militarily.

On the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), 49 per cent of those who support the Government policy said India should not sign it under any circumstances. For nuclear weapons advocates, the percentage supporting this view was 52.

Seventeen per cent among those who back the Government policy of keeping the nuclear option open said India should unilaterally sign the NPT while 35 per cent said it could do so if Pakistan also signed it.

Among those supporting nuclear weapons acquisition, 16 per cent favoured a unilateral signing up by New Delhi while 31 per cent said it should be done along with Islamabad.

Among those who favoured renunciation of a nuclear option, 30 per cent said India should do so bilaterally with Pakistan and the two should sign the NPT. The next major group, 25 per cent, said India should do so jointly with Pakistan and China. Twenty per cent favoured a unilateral renunciation along with joining the NPT while 17 per cent said India should do so unilaterally, but without signing the treaty. Only four per cent said India should do so bilaterally with Pakistan while not signing the NPT.

Asked why India should renounce nuclear weapons, the majority, 46 per cent, said they were morally repugnant, 41 per cent said their production harms the environment, 34 said India could not afford nuclear weapons, 29 per cent said these weapons do not address the primary threats to India's security (identified as terrorism and insurgency), and 15 per cent said a nuclear India would become the target of the major nuclear powers.

When nuclear advocates were asked to what extent should the country develop nuclear weapons the majority of 35 per cent favoured an arsenal capable of striking all major nuclear powers. Closely followed at 34 per cent were those who said all components should be developed but should not be actually assembled. Nineteen per cent favoured a nuclear arsenal capable of striking both China and Pakistan while 12 per cent preferred confining the capability to only Pakistan.

Those supporting the current official policy were asked what circumstances might lead them to renounce nuclear weapons. In reply 58 per cent cited a time-bound plan for global nuclear disarmament, 26 per cent wanted a verifiable ban or Pakistan's nuclear weapons development, and 15 per cent preferred a boundary settlement with China and the removal of nuclear weapons from Tibet.

Among the nuclear hawks, 42 per cent said a global agreement to eliminate nuclear testing and development would create a situation which India could give up nuclear weapons. However, a third of this group saw no circumstance which could lead them to change their position on nuclear weapons.

The survey, which covered respondents in the cities of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Lucknow and Hyderabad, concludes that an international treaty would reduce the regional threat caused by the possibility of Pakistan acquiring a nuclear weapon and also reduce the political leverage which nuclear weapon states have over non nuclear states.

Commentary Considers Maneuvers Before NPT Vote

BK0103085395 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 1 Mar 95 pp 1, 3

[Commentary by Jasjit Singh: "US Faces No-Win Situation at NPT Meet"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) will come up for extension in another two months. The series of preparatory conferences, the most recent of which was held in the last week of January, have not been able to resolve even the procedural matters.

So the first thing that the Extension Conference will have to do is to spend some time on ironing out the differences on issues like the voting and counting methodology. This will add to the existing dissensions as the final moments of decision-making approach ever closer.

Looking at the trends of the NPT debate, and time positions being taken by many countries, it appears that the United States may have made a mistake in going all out for an "indefinite and unconditional" extension as the only goal. It may be recalled that even countries like Japan had two years ago expressed reservations about this approach.

Persistent efforts on the part of the US did bring some harmonisation of G-7 positions. While the G-7 countries support an indefinite extension, it is not quite clear whether all of them also support its "unconditional" extension.

Indeed fewer and fewer people are talking of an unconditionaol extension. This is not to suggest that the NPT will be amended in any way; but that the Nuclear Weapon States will be required to ensure that commitments embedded in the NPT, but not honoured for a quarter century, are implemented in future.

US and Soviet officials, who negotiated the NPT in 1968, have recently agreed that the Nuclear Weapon States have the legal obligation to disarmament under Article VI. But in an effort to pre-empt any trend toward renewed commitments for disarmament, many nonprolifeation experts (and some Western diplomats) have been arguing in recent months that the NPT carries no commitment to nuclear disarmament.

Selected portions of the preamble to the treaty are quoted in support of this view; and Article VI is explained away as a commitment only to enter into negotiations, rather than an absolute goal of achieving disarmament.

This line of argument would indicate that the Nuclear Weapon States are running out of sound reasons to justify the unlimited extension of the NPT, espcecially in the context of their failure to meet their own commitments under the treaty.

Equally important are the shifting positions of many states. Egypt, for example, has assumed a leadership role in arms-control measures in the MIddle East, and has been pressing for Israel's accession to the NPT. It has now taken the lead in linking up its support for extension with the demand for Israel to be brought within the NPT framework.

It may be recalled that Egypt had made its signature Convention conditional upon Israel's willingness to join the NPT. The signals coming out of Cairo clearly indicate at this point that if Israel does not join the NPT, and even if the NPT is indefinitely extended by overwhelming support, Egypt would not join the extend treaty.

In December 1994, Foreign Minister Mousa repeatedly demanded that Israel sign the NPT; and this was soon followed by a series of statements by President Mubarak, stressing his unwillingness "to sign the treaty" if Israel did not. In late 1994 Egypt also launched a major effort to gather wide Arab support for its position. Egypt also included the resolution of the nuclear issue in its definition of "comprehensive peace".

In January 1995, Egypt raised the issue with the visiting US Secretary of Defence, William J. Perry. In early February, Egypt, Syria and the six GCC countries raised the issue as a coalition strategy. This was followed by the Arab League agreeing to coordinate its policy on the subject.

It is early to assume that the Egyptian/Arab position will remain firm and cause a significant effect on the course of NPT extension. Egypt had got the Arab states together on the Chemical Weapons Convention. But two-thirds finally joined up. Egypt is the largest aid receiver from the United States. It would find the costs rather high if it pursues its present position to its logical conclusion.

On the other hand some sort of a compromise, leading to a sharper statement of intent from Israel, may finally evolve. But this would seriously weaken the drive for an indefinite extension of the NPT, and the US may have to settle for a shorter extension.

At the same time Iran, besides supporting the Arab position, along with many other states has been highlighting the fact that the Nuclear Weapon States have not only failed to live up to their commitments on cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as stipulated in Article VI of the treaty, but that such cooperation has been expressly denied on questionable grounds to NPT members.

Indonesia took the stand at the last preparotory conference that, at the 1995 Conference, the NPT parties should examine together the "implementation of the treaty's provisions and discuss how best to ensure the realisation of its fundamental purposes—the non- proliferation of nuclear weapons and their ultimate elimination".

Japan also has proposed that the NPT regarded as central to efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon free world, and emphasised in particular the centrality of Article VI. The reference to Article VI was finally dropped under pressure from the USA and France. Indonesia also proposed that the practice of decision-making by consensus-established at the NPT review conferences over the previous 20 years—should be preferably followed for the extension decision.

The NPT extension conference will meet from April 17 to May 12 this year. At the end of the last preparatory conference, the US was certain of only about 60-65 countries with a clear support for an indefinite extension-well short of the 86 votes it would need.

The West does not intend to present a strategy of programme of measures to strengthen the working of the NPT. Even the German proposal for a public register of Nuclear Weapon States was not adopted by the European Union.

On the other hand, a large group of non-nuclear weapon states from the developing world had set forth six objectives in Geneva on which they wanted to see progress: a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT), negative and positive security assurances, a cut-off on production of fissile materials, nuclear weapon-free zones and "disarmament in a time-bound fashion", besides elimination of export restrictions.

A CTBT may not get concluded during 1995 because of the weakened domestic position of Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton. China and France have said they will not sign before 1996, and China is certain to keep testing till then. French policy will remain ambigious in any case till President Mitterand's successor takes office in May 1995.

China has also linked its support to a CTBT that would permit peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs), but it may not receive much support on this issue. Hydro-nuclear testing is another major hurdle in finalising the CTBT. The other issues are even more tricky and unlikely to be resolved so soon.

The problems for the United States would be that if it shifts its position too early in line with reality that an indefinite extension at this stage appears almost impossible and settles for a shorter extension, of say 25 years, the pressure for further commitments to disarmament, etc., would only grow. On the other hand, if it delays or sticks to the position of indefinite extension, failure to achieve such an extension would constitute a major diplomatic and poliitcal defeat, with far reaching consequences for its future role in global affairs.

It is clear that the NPT extension conference is likely to become contentious and even acrimonious. India is not a party to the treaty and has no direct role to play in the extension, although its outcome will remain a key interest. At this stage, we should stay clear of the controversial process of extension; and should not participate as an observer. But it is to be hoped that the parties to the treaty would work for a harmonious decision, so that the cause of non-proliferation is not jeopardised.

Professor Endorsed for WTO Secretary General

BK2802144895 Delhi THE ECONOMIC TIMES in English 18 Feb 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Right choice"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The developed countries are trying hard to disprove the sceptical bard who said never the twain shall meet, at the World Trade Organisation [WTO]. But on the West's terms. Which means the developing world should accept the western standards on human rights and matters environmental. As eminent economist Jagdish Bhagwati recently pointed out, the WTO is not the place where these issues can judiciously be addressed. The WTO takes up trade-related and not social matters. For issues relating to labour, there is the International Labour Organisation. True, children should go to school and not work in factories. But, as Prof Bhagwati argues, if work is essential for the child labourers' subsistence and the alternative is starvation, trade sanctions on goods made by children will only add to their misery. When the West expresses concern about child labour, it is worried about its own goods being out-competed by cheap products from developing countries. Similarly, western concerns about the environment are genuine and should be appreciated. But, as Prof Bhagwati points out, universal standards are unjustified. Much of the damage to the global environment is attributable to the resource-intensive and wasteful process of development by means of which the developed world attained its present standards of living. Now setting strict standards would amount to depriving developing countries opportunity for high growth. Environmental sensitivity is important, but it can be better accomplished through persuasion rather than pressures, particularly those in the form of trade sanctions, as Prof Bhagwati points out.

Prof Bhagwati has probably not much chance of making it to secretary general of the WTO. For he does not share the western viewpoint on human rights and their environmental standards. But developing countries should lend their support to his candidature, as several US economists have done. For someone of Prof Bhagwati's stature and clarity on basic issues is required to prevent protectionist pressures of the developed countries masquerading their way into the set of principles that govern the functioning of the WTO.

Commentary Views Collapse of Barings Bank

BK0103090795 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Commentary by Chandra Shekhar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Barings, one of the oldest merchant banks of United Kingdom, collapsed on account of bad trading in Singapore estimated to have resulted in a loss of about 600 million pounds, a whopping 3,000 crore rupees. As the contract was item Nikkei 225 average, the losses are likely to be much more with the falling index. The attempts by the Bank of England, which is the central bank there, to save Barings have failed and this has sent shock waves in the stock markets linked with the global system.

The crash of the stock markets in Europe and the eastern world is an immediate fallout of the collapse of one of the reputed European merchant banks. However, despite some initial apprehensions, the Indian stock markets did not witness any adverse fallout during the last couple of trading sessions. The markets here were not affected primarily because the exposure of Barings which is registered with SEBI [Securities and Exchange Board of India] as a foreign institutional investor is very limited. Some estimates suggest that the exposure of Barings in the Indian market was of the order of $30 million that is about 100 crore rupees, which is negligible. The impact of the collapse, however, will be felt in the Indian market in a longer period of time. Initially the investors in Europe will become cautious as far as the emerging markets are concerned. That will affect the resource base of the FFI's [Foreign Financial Institutions] who have been quite active in the Indian market since the Narasimha Rao government initiated economic reforms. Secondly, the Indian companies which shall try to float Euroissues will have to be cautious as the response from the investors abroad might not be encouraging for the time being at least.

On Indian soil, the collapse of a European merchant bank will too make the policy makers cautious. The government, it may be mentioned, recently promulgated an ordinance to initiate futures and options trading. The attempt was to integrate Indian markets to their global counterparts. Although the direction will more or less remain the same, the government and specially SEBI will be needing to take only measured steps, but stock exchanges of the country and also the stock broking firms and merchant bankers will have to become wiser, lest they should land themselves in a similar situation.

Article Sees 'Decline' in Iranian Ties

BK0103015795 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 21 Feb 95 p 9

[Article by K.P. Nayar under the "Diplomacy" rubric: "The Gateway to Central Asia awaits a knock"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There has been virtually no criticism during the current election campaign in five states over the manner in which the Congress Government has conducted its foreign policy during the last three and a half years. The only criticism—that too muted was prompted by media reports about the Government's inability to stand up to pressure from Washington on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation.

Shortly after the Narasimha Rao Government came to power in New Delhi, the Bharatiya Janata Party's [BJP] top leadership gathered in Trivandrum: there they adopted a document, which set out the BJP's foreign policy agenda.

It is illuminating to look at that document three years later. Most of the things that were on the BJP's external affairs agenda have been implemented by the Congress Government.

It would be unfair to suggest that there was any design or pro-BJP conspiracy behind the Congress Government's actions on the foreign policy front. On the contrary, what this suggests is a broad consensus among the major players on the political stage over India's external affairs.

Neither the Congressmen nor opposition leaders have stinted in their praise of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao for the way he has conducted India's foreign policy. Considering the mess in South Block [External Affairs Ministry] that Mr Rao inherited, his Government's foreign policy turnaround has been truly remarkable.

It is all the more disturbing, therefore, that amidst a string of successes, India's handling of Iran sticks out as a monumental policy failure on the part of South Block. During the last one year, there has been a sea-change from the euphoria that had come to be associated with Indo-Iranian relations in 1992-93.

Iran was one of those countries, whose relations with India came under the personal scrutiny of Mr Rao when he became the Prime Minister. His long experience as external affairs minister had convinced him of the importance of having a modus vivendi with Iran.

Relations between New Delhi and Tehran were at their nadir during the National Front government. Iran had administered the rare diplomatic snub of asking the then external affairs minister, Mr I.K. Gujral, to call off his visit to Tehran on the eve of the minister's departure from New Delhi. The Iranians cited the situation in Kashmir as their reason for calling off the visit.

Mr Rao was determined to reverse this decline in bilateral relations. In late 1991, he asked the then foreign secretary, Mr J.N. Dixit, who had just taken charge, to work out an agenda to engage the Iranians towards this objective.

The Iranian foreign minister, Mr Akbar Velayati, appreciated New Delhi's changed perception of Iran. And he got down to work with his interlocutors from South Block to provide both substance and sustenance to Indo-Iranian relations.

The high point of an intense phase of Indo-Iranian interaction, which followed was a highly successful visit by Mr Rao to Tehran in September 1993. Iran offered to be India's gateway to Central Asia: an impressive agenda for economic activity, including a large number of joint ventures was readied for follow up action.

The investment made in the bilateral relationship during 1992-93, paid off in March last year at the UN Human Rights Conference in Geneva. India and Iran had come a long way: when the then external affairs minister, Mr Dinesh Singh, visited Tehran in early 1994, it was possible for the two sides to talk in terms of an alliance among India, Iran and China.

However, during the last one year, the relationship has been going steadily downhill. Compared to the intensity of bilateral visits in 1992-93, last year has been barren.

The joint economic activity that Mr Rao's Tehran visit promised to unleash has not materialised. There is now an ambiguity in India's relations with Iran, which merits a detailed investigation on the part of those who want national interests to be the sole consideration in foreign policy.

The sad truth is that Indo-Iranian relations have become captive to the interests of one non-resident Indian (NRI) family, which has a vested interest in the relationship.

Take, for instance, the much-talked about gas pipeline project from Iran to India. A Bombay-based Indian business house showed its willingness recently to get into the project and the Iranians agreed to the idea. But New Delhi stymied the proposal because it was keen to offer the NRI family a share of the cake.

While India is dragging its feet on the proposed pipeline, Iran and Pakistan have agreed to set up a consortium to build a 1,600-km gas pipeline from Bushehr to Karachi. Elsewhere, the former US secretary of state, Mr Alexander Haig, has been actively involved in a project to build a 3,800-km gas pipeline from Turkmenistan through northern Iran into Turkey.

The pipeline venture is only one of the Indo-Iranian projects, which has become a victim of the unwholesome influence that the NRI family has come to exercise on the conduct of Indian foreign policy in the last one year.

There are people in the Government, who believe they ought to reciprocate favours done for them by the family in question in Tripoli or Timbuktu a long time ago. Such a willingness to compromise has upset the checks and balances built into the Indian system to avoid a derailment of policy.

Hopefully, the visit by the Iranian President, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, tentatively scheduled for April, will remove these aberrations and put Indo-Iranian relations on course once again.

As the experience in 1992-93 has shown, there is much to be gained by constructively engaging the Iranians, who are not only a regional power in their right, but also one of the oldest practitioners of diplomacy in the world.

Cultural Exchange Program Established With China

BK0103013495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and China have signed a cultural exchange program for closer ties in education, culture, arts, and related areas. It proposes exchange of cultural delegations, performing art troupes and experts in arts and culture. It will promote interaction between educationists. It also suggests holding of joint seminars, participation in each other's film festivals and book fairs, and exchange of radio and television programs.

Commentary Views Effects of Pakistani Violence

BK2502143995 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Commentary by Manohar Singh Batra]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For quite some time, the ethnic scene in Pakistan has been clouded by thick layers of dust rising from bloody battles between the beleaguered citizens and the so-called custodians of the law and order machinery. The velocity with which violence has been rocking that country, especially the commercial capital Karachi and various other parts of the southern province of Sindh, has left the world aghast. Observers have been watching in disbelief if the present level of lawlessness would allow the country comprising volatile ethnic communities and driven by deep rooted prejudices to consolidate its injured identity.

Though the ethnic cauldron has been simmering from the very day the natal cord of Pakistan was cut and the new nation came into being, the powerful convulsions started with the Bengalis in the erstwhile East Pakistan claiming their legitimate share in the affairs of the composite state. The highhandedness of the military dictatorship and the political avarice of shortsighted leaders in the western wing had denied the ethnic Bengalis their due place in the governance of the nation. That was the first fatal blow to the body of the so-called ideological state of Pakistan. To buttress this ideology in the wake of the partition, a sizable number of Urdu speaking muslims migrated to both wings of Pakistan. Those from the northern part of India, who euphorically chose to settle down in the promised land, largely preferred the industrially advanced Sindh, and those who wanted to survey the fresh pastures of East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, left the Indian state of Bihar to march eastward. Both these groups soon learnt a lesson the hard way as they were not assimilated with the indigenous population and till this day are unsettled and reaping a harvest of hostility. This has [words indistinct] settlers in what is now left of Pakistan and even their second generation is being targeted by their tormentors because of their ethnic branding.

It is ironical that during this international year of tolerance, Pakistan has become a veritable battlefield of ethnic and factional strife. Religious extremism and fundamentalism have become the rule in force. Assassinations on streets and cold-blodded murders in holy mosques have become the order of the day. Earlier, Ahmediyas were the victims. Now Shi'ites are the prime target. The hapless Urdu speaking immigrants in Sindh, still known as Muhajirs, have to bear the brunt and forfeit their lives. Those who dare expose these trends are subjected to physical threat and attempts to elimination. The recent attack on the chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Miss Asma Jehangir, is an eye opener. She had the temerity of arguing in the appeal case in a which a court of law had passed death against a 14 year old Christian boy and another person on a charge of blasphemy. A communication to the UN Human Rights Commission has ruffled the feathers of the religious bigots. One can hope that this pathetic cry of human rights protagonist in Pakistan to a UN forum will be heard and due concern expressed over the rise of ethnic prejudices and religious intolerance in that country.

The plight of the Biharis in Bangladesh is no less pitiable who have been jettisoned by Pakistan and are being disowned by Bangladesh. They were opponents of the independence of Bangladesh and had opted for Pakistan. Even their willingness to leave the coast of [word indistinct] has not moved their masters in Pakistan. The natural inference that can be drawn by observers is that the cauldron of ethnicity and religious inequity is having its heavy toll. The scars of racialism are deep on the hearts of the hardy Pakhtoons. The wounds of military action inflicted on the brave Balochis in the seventies have not yet healed. Mayhem on the Muhajirs in Sindh and the cold shouldering by Pakistan of Biharis in Bangladesh complete the circle of alienation. Even the ethnic Sindhis have now demanded the right of self-determination. At least the rising death toll in the internecine warfare in Pakistan has debunked the bogey of Indian interference in their affairs.

Inquiry Ordered Into LTTE Jailbreak in Madras

BK0103013695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Tamil Nadu Government has ordered a judicial inquiry into the escape of nine hard-core LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] militants from the Madras Central Jail last night. The state chief secretary has written to the chief justice of Madras High Court to recommend the name of a judge for the inquiry.

Meanwhile, out of the nine escaped militants, two were apprehended early in the morning. Another militant died after consuming cyanide when surrounded by the police.

Iran

Shalikashvili Remarks on Hawk Missiles 'Propaganda'

LD0103122695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] General Shalikashvili, U.S. chief of the Army Staff, in a press conference on Tuesday [28 February] announced: Iran has stationed antiaircraft Hawk missiles on the mouth of the Persian Gulf. He said: These measures will help us reach some conclusions. General Shalikashvili, in the same interview, stated: Iran is intending to threaten shipping round the Strait of Hormuz.

According to political experts, Shalikashvili's comments are made in line with the U.S. adverse propaganda to darken the relation between Iran and the neighboring states in the south of the Persian Gulf. In this regard one can say that the only real danger in the Persian Gulf is the presence of U.S. naval fleet in the Persian Gulf; since in case the shipping is endangered, oil countries will be losers but the U.S.—it would wage a propaganda campaign out of the event. Therefore, if the U.S. is really worried about the security in the strategic Hormuz Strait, it should get its naval fleet out of the region.

It seems quite clear for the public opinion that any country would resort to some measures to maintain its security. In this particular case, the presence of the antiaircraft rockets would only threaten the invading airplanes and not the commercial ships or the oil tankers.

According to informed politicians, the U.S. uses these news as propaganda tools to justify her interferences. Political analysts of the region believe that since policies on pressuring Iran through political and economic means did not work, the U.S. is trying to create a favorable atmosphere for military aggression.

Generally speaking, U.S. military threat will fail just like the tricks on economic fields failed to produce any results. And the U.S. will learn a lesson more bitter than that from Tabas incident [abortive hostage rescue mission in 1980].

Commentator Predicts Failure of U.S. Sanctions

LD2802140995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The AFP quoting from the MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY WEEKLY, released on Monday 27 February, spoke of the continuation of Washington's political-economic pressures against the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI]. AFP said the 25 U.S. senators have backed the U.S. Republican Senator Alphonse D'Amato's plan on implementing wide-scale economic sanctions against Iran. It is to be noted that based on his plan, corporations whose bulk of capital is at the disposal of the American citizens have been barred from having economic relations with Iran.

According to political analysts this is not the first time that the U.S. Government officials are making efforts in ratifying a plan on exerting pressures on the IRI. But amid all this, what is mostly engaging the attention of political experts and even a number of U.S. politicians is the likely failure of such endeavors.

Political analysts hold that the U.S. political-economic efforts, despite America's active diplomacy on consultations with Washington's European allies as well as Japan and recently the holding of talks with Russian officials for removing any cooperation with IRI, has suffered an utter setback. As an example to this we can refer to the fresh round of efforts made by the U.S. in implementing Tehran's bond ties and limiting such ties which has presently not only failed to undergo any sort of change in terms of politics and economics, but according to informed economic sources, German companies exported over $2.5 billion to Iran in 1993. Thus, Germany is to be considered one of Iran's main trade partners.

Elsewhere, the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's negative response to the U.S. President on isolating Iran, is another testimony to the failure of the U.S. strategy against the IRI. At any rate, the great many fiascos suffered by the U.S. in its political propaganda efforts against the IRI is another proof to the independence of these countries in establishing sound relations with Iran. This is also another evidence to the reality that independent countries such as Germany, Japan, and Russia are never to be influenced by views expressed by Washington in selecting their manner and type of relations with the IRI.

On the other hand political analysts maintain that capitalists in America who are constantly facing economic rivals in Europe are not upbeat on America passive efforts in exerting economic pressures on Iran. They also consider the continuation of such a policy to be to their own detriment. At any rates the experts predict Washington to be the political-economic loser of the current trends.

U.S. Ban on Iranian Oil Expected To 'Backfire'

LD2802134695 Tehran IRNA in English 1333 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, Feb. 28, IRNA—Any attempt by the Clinton administration to impose a total ban on U.S. oil firms trading with Iran is expected to backfire on the market and the American companies themselves.

The idea of total trade conspiracy against Iran is only in its embryonic on Capitol Hill, but according to ENERGY COMPASS, it has "already managed to spook major oil companies."

While overall supplies to the market will be unaffected, such a ban would "trigger geographical crude supply dislocation," sources were reported warning. One immediate consequence was the likelihood of leading to sharply higher crude prices.

Despite U.S. oil companies already being subject to a domestic embargo, affiliates are thought to account for some 25 per cent of all Iranian crude sales supplied to other markets.

ENERGY COMPASS reported that opponents of extending the ban argue it would leave Iran unaffected as it would be able to sell the oil to other markets and make U.S. firms scramble for new supplies at a time when sour crude was increasingly scarce in Europe.

Traders were quoted as saying that Iran would send its cargoes east that would create a major sour shortage in Europe driving prices through the roof.

Analysts were said to caution however against any panic as it would take months of congressional hearing before there was any chance of a total embargo, whereas more than one Washington insider was noting powerful U.S. oil lobbies were gearing for a fight.

The proposal to extend the ban is being made by the Republican senator, chairman of the banking, housing and urban affairs committee, Alfonse D'Amato, who failed in a previous attempt several years ago.

U.S. Said 'Fostering Injustice' in Foreign Policy

LD2602142495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgiy Mamedov met and conferred with the Iranian foreign minister in Tehran on February the 25th. [passage omitted]

It goes without saying that America's reaction to the Iran-Russian nuclear cooperation is indicative of a dual U.S. approach. For according to the nuclear experts, the reactors which Russia is to put at Iran's disposal is exactly the same type which the U.S. is to develop for North Korea.

It is astounding however that U.S. officials maintain that the presence of such reactors in North Korea is risk free whereas on the other hand they hold that the existence of the precisely same round of reactors in Iran poses a grave danger to the region.

As Mr. Kozyrev has underlined in his message to Dr. Velayati, presently a number of Western states, including the U.S., are fostering injustice across the world through their policies. But as nothing is as important as national sovereignty independent states have not remained silent in the face of these policies.

On the whole, Moscow's decision in pursuing an independent policy in cooperating with the Islamic Republic of Iran could, beyond doubt, be assessed as another set back suffered by the U.S. in exerting pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Organization Director Says U.S. Not Abiding by NPT

LD2802212695 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1815 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Interview with Dr. Reza Amrollahi, director of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization, by unidentified correspondent in the studio; date not given; from the "With the Officials" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] Dr. Amrollahi, regarding the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]: Today we have the Atomic Energy Organization and various power stations. We are taking serious steps in the nuclear field. Have we broken the treaty in any way or not? Have we followed the treaty to the letter?

[Amrollahi] Let me talk about the NPT briefly...

[Correspondent, interrupting] Can I just say that we have around three minutes left.

[Amrollahi] In that case, I must talk very quickly!

[Correspondent] Please do!

[Amrollahi] Look, the NPT was formulated to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It was formulated...

[Correspondent, interrupting] By weapons do you mean destructive nuclear weapons?

[Amrollahi] When we say weapons, we mean destructive. They do not do anything else!

[Correspondent] Destructive, yes.

[Amrollahi] Anyway, this treaty was formulated so that certain countries would help others so that their peaceful nuclear industry grows. If you allow me, I will briefly mention the main articles of the NPT. Then you can see for yourself and the debate can continue.

The first article says: Governments that possess nuclear weapons are banned from exchanging or transferring them to others. They are also banned from exchanging or transferring nuclear weapon technology. So this means the weapons must remain within those three or four countries that have nuclear weapons. Well, we can at least say that when it comes to Israel, America has not done this. Keep this point in mind.

The second article says: Those countries that do not have nuclear weapons promise not to get them, in other words, will not try to acquire them. We are one of those countries. Right from the beginning we were never after nuclear weapons and we are not either. We have announced this to the world.

The third article says: The International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] is responsible for the above.

The fourth article, which is one of the important articles of this treaty, says: The peaceful use of nuclear energy is every country's right, all countries. Therefore, according to this treaty, those countries that have nuclear technology must help other countries in their research, production, and use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Again, we see that they [U.S.] are doing the complete opposite, at least when it comes to us. In other words, they are creating problems for us left, right, and center.

The sixth [as heard] article says: Negotiations on nuclear disarmament must continue and those countries I told you about in article one should disarm. Again, we see that this is just a slogan. I have not seen America take any step toward disarmament—on the contrary, it has helped these false countries such as Israel.

[Correspondent] Dr. Amrollahi! I have many questions in mind about what you have been saying so far. I can easily imagine that we can forever continue the debate on atoms, nuclear power and its pros and cons. However, the program's time is short. So we have to be short and brief just like the atom.

Nevertheless, what I can say in this short time is that in view of the provisions of the NPT, does the IAEA's power to control and supervise nuclear power apply equally and even-handedly to all the countries of the world with a nuclear capability?

[Amrollahi] The IAEA is really keen to be impartial and even- handed. However, there are some elements who interfere in its work; elements such as America. Right now, if the IAEA delays its inspection of our country by six months, or if it does not carry out its inspection at all, it will face hundreds of questions. But Israel, in total and utmost shamelessness says that it does not accept the NPT, and America chooses to defend such a stance. America sends a delegation to Egypt to convince the Egyptians to sign the treaty even though Israel refuses to do the same. We call this discrimination.

We say that the Islamic Republic of Iran accepts the NPT on the condition that there is no discrimination. After all Iran is indeed a member of the treaty. [sentence as heard]

We nevertheless have some proposals now that the NPT is due for a review during the next few months. Our first proposal is something that we have been saying right from the outset—that is we want a Middle East that is free from nuclear weapons. In other words, in relation to their [the West's] wishes for peaceful use of nuclear power, we have a proposal ourselves, saying that the region altogether, and not just Iran, should be free from nuclear weapons. That is to say no country in the region should possess these weapons. So let us pursue this aim.

The second proposal is that we demand an even-handed and impartial attitude, for instance toward Israel, which says that it neither accepts the NPT nor is it prepared to allow the IAEA to inspect its facilities. According to our proposal Israel should not be left free to do what it wants, it should instead be dealt with.

Our next proposal is that the peaceful use of nuclear power by countries that have signed the NPT should be facilitated. By this we mean that for instance Iran, which has signed the NPT, should not be harassed or bothered constantly and it should not have to face numerous problems and obstacles every day.

Countries with nuclear capabilities should give the necessary guarantees and assurances to the nonnuclear states, so that there is no chance or opportunity for provocations, threats, bullying, etc.

Finally, we are in favor of strict compliance with the ban on production and storage of nuclear weapons.

We also propose that a well-planned disarmament timetable should be devised for countries with nuclear weapons. We strongly favor such a move.

[Correspondent] We wish you success and thank your for taking part in our program. [passage omitted]

Official Denies Whereabouts of Israeli Pilot

JN2802185995 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Report by Muhammad Sadiq al-Husayni in Tehran]

[FBIS Translated Text] Replying to the repeated Israeli accusations that Israeli pilot Ron Arad is now in Iran, Dr. Mamhud Mohammadi, official spokesman of the

Iranian Foreign Ministry, in an exclusive statement to our radio, has denied any knowledge of the whereabouts of the pilot. He said that Israel's insistence on involving Iran in this issue at this particular time is one of its media methods, which have now been exposed by Arab, Islamic, and world public opinion.

Mohammadi added: While emphasizing the fact that we do not interfere in such issues, we vehemently condemn the continued Israeli artillery shelling against the residents of southern Lebanon, as well as the unfair Israeli siege of the Lebanese ports. We demand that Islamic public opinion end its indifference toward these ongoing moves, which are hostile to Islam and the Muslims, by the illegitimate Zionist entity, which is accustomed to using Lebanon to shuffle the cards in the region whenever this entity faces internal crises or negotiating problems.

In another development, sources close to the Lebanese fundamentalists have commented on this issue. They said that the Tel Aviv rulers have apparently overlooked the fact that their pilot landed in southern Lebanon while bombing civilians as part of an unfair war, which has been going on against Lebanon since 1982. At the same time, Israel demands the closing of the file of its pilot and other soldiers without paying any attention to our prisoners and detainees in the al-Khiyam [camp] and Israeli jails, the sources added.

For their part, political observers in Tehran view Tehran's dispatch of a senior Iranian Foreign Ministry official; namely, Mohammad Kazem Khansari, to Beirut after Tehran has been accused of holding the Israeli pilot as a clear message to the concerned parties in the international community to the effect that any discussion of the issue of the Israeli pilot will be determined by the ongoing war in Lebanon between those who are resisting the occupation and the leaders of occupation.

Embassy Denies Involvement in Killing Kurdish Leaders

LD0103101095 Tehran IRNA in English 0917 GMT 1 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vienna, Mar. 1, IRNA—The Iranian Embassy here Tuesday [28 February] sharply rejected accusations leveled at Iran's counter-intelligence services by Austrian daily "WIENER ZEITUNG".

The daily, in its Friday editorial had connected Iran's counter- intelligence services with the killing in Vienna and Berlin of Kurdish leaders Sadeq Sharafkandi and 'Abdolrahman Qasemlu.

"WIENER ZEITUNG" also reported of cooperation between German and Iranian security organs in the affair.

The embassy, in a press release called the report as "baseless" and stressed that Iran had no connection with those killings and there were no evidence proving otherwise. The release further stated that Iran, herself, has on several occasions been the victim of terrorism and condemns all forms of terrorism. Publication of such false reports as well as comments made by some Austrian officials unfortunately become propaganda tools in the hands of those who aim to destroy cooperation and understanding between nations and also to stray public opinion, emphasized the release.

Referring to Austrian press laws, the Iranian Embassy also called on the daily to publish the contents of the press release in its next edition.

Foreign Ministry Official Views European Ties

LD2802143395 Tehran IRNA in English 1323 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 28, IRNA—Iran could have normal relations with Britain, a European Union (EU) member, if London abided by the principles of mutual respect, reported 'IRAN NEWS' daily here Tuesday [28 Fbruary] quoting a senior Foreign Ministry official.

The paper said that Foreign Ministry director general for West Europe, 'Ali Ahani, stated that British officials seemed to have a positive bent for normal ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"This propensity has been observed in contacts with British officials through the embassies, meetings of the two countries' foreign ministers in New York, etc.," Ahani told the English-language paper adding that there were some British groups aiming to mar the ties and some British official who have uttered irresponsible statements.

The paper quoted the official as noting that relations would be strengthened when both sides adopted a positive attitude and as long as such mutual will did not exist, serious steps could not be taken towards this end.

Referring to France, Ahani told the daily "Iran's policy was to have sound ties with that country based on mutual respect." He also expressed optimism over the future of Iran-France cultural and political ties.

"Plans are underway to promote relations with France," said the official while referring to a recent visit to Tehran by the French Foreign Ministry-general, during which agreements in different fields, especially in the economic sphere, were reached, reported the daily.

It further quoted Ahani as saying that regular visits were to be made every six months by both countries' deputy foreign ministers and that Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy foreign minister of Iran was to visit Paris in the first half of the coming Iranian year (to start next March) while in June Iran and the EU member states would hold talks in Paris.

The official stressed that the past experiences have proven that Iran could have sound relations with different French wings to ensure bilateral relations, Ahani said, adding that votes of the French people in determination of their future would be respected.

Elsewhere, reported the paper, Ahani referred to Germany's decision to have Hermes resume insuring Iranian transactions and said this development was a practical step that increased the chance of German firms' activities in Iran which was soon to launch its second plan.

Ahani was quoted as saying that German Economy Ministry's Director General for Foreign Economic Relations (Shumerous) would arrive in Tehran to hold talks with Iranian officials for the promotion of economic and trade ties, paving the ground for the fourth Iran-German joint economic commission.

Efforts were underway to resume the operations of French (Coface) and Italian (Sace) in Iran, Ahani said noting that these would soon become operational, reported the paper.

On pressures exerted by the U.S. on Europe to reduce the level of ties with Iran, the daily quoted the official as saying that European public opinion disapproved of their governments' bent to draw up its foreign policy in accordance with U.S. wishes.

On the other hand, noted the official, Europe, given its familiarity with global and regional realities, did not wish to ignore the Islamic Republic of Iran in this strategic zone, since sound relations with Iran would ensure European interests.

The official referred to Iran-Denmark relations and said Iran attached importance to ties with Denmark since it was a member of the EU and that presently the two countries have exchanged ambassadors.

Iran and Denmark have relatively good economic and trade cooperation, Ahani pointed out saying that in negotiations Danish officials have indicated desire to upgrade ties with Iran, reported IRAN NEWS.

Majles Reduces Urgency of Anti-Inflation Bill

LD2802131095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] During today's open session of the Majles, that was attended by members of the Guardian Council, the bill on dealing with economic violations was raised again. In its last session, the Majles approved the urgency of the bill. Our correspondent reports, however, that after listening to some of the deputies' comments in favor and against this bill, a proposal by a number of the deputies to downgrade slightly the urgency of the bill was voted on. The proposal was approved and the bill was passed to the appropriate commission for further debate.

The deputies who proposed the bill said the reason for their suggestion is the significance and sensitivity of the issue. They stressed the need for a comprehensive and careful study of this bill.

According to our correspondent's report, during today's open session the eight remaining articles of the bill enabling the government to increase its revenue for funding certain expenditures were approved. The reviewing process was completed after the second reading.

Vice President Cited on Progress of Reconstruction

LD2702174295 Tehran IRNA in English 1558 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 27, IRNA—About eighty percent of the Iranians displaced during the Iraqi imposed war, have returned to their towns in war-stricken areas in the southwest and west of Iran, the vice-president for executive affairs said on Monday [27 February]. A release faxed to IRNA by the public relations office of the presidential bureau, did not give any figure about the displaced.

Hamid Mirzadeh who is also the president's special representative for reconstruction of war-torn regions, said up to rls. [rials] 2,450 billion in credit has been spent to pay for damages of war in five Iranian provinces.

Half of the amount was spent to repair the damages inflicted on residential, business, industrial and agricultural sites and the other half was used for rebuilding cultural and social centers and for implementation of infrastructural projects, he added.

Mirzadeh predicted that the credit would reach rls. 3 billion by the end of the next Iranian year 1374 (starting March 1996).

He said a rls. 700 billion credit was allocated for reconstruction projects in the next year. The credit would help finish reconstruction of damaged residential buildings as well as industrial and business sites, he said.

The vice-president said the total credit allocated for compensating lack of development in war-stricken areas in the Second Five-Year Plan (1995-1999) is rls. 2,100 billion which would be spent in the first three years of the plan.

More than 78 cities and 2,300 villages were damaged or completely destroyed in the eight year Iraqi war (1980-1988), Mirzadeh said. So far, 4,923 projects have been carried out during the first development plan, he added. Each displaced family has received an average amount of rls. 7,500,000 as compensation, Mirzadeh noted. He said rls. 2,450 billion has been spent on big projects such as reconstructing the Imam port's petrochemical plant, refineries, power plants and leading agricutural projects in Khuzestan and other war-stricken areas.

Va'ezi's Central Asian Tour Begins in Turkmenistan

LD2802210195 Tehran IRNA in English 2043 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb. 28, (IRNA)—Iranian deputy foreign minister for Euro-American affairs Mahmud Va'ezi arrived in Ashgabad Tuesday [28 February] on the first leg of his trip to the capitals of Central Asian states and was welcomed by the Turkmen Foreign Minister Boris Shikhmurdov.

In their meeting later Tuesday the two officials reviewed outlooks in relations between Tehran and Ashgabad and agreed that closer bilateral relations would, in its own right, be promotive of peace and security in the region.

The Iranian foreign ministry official referred to the Caspian Sea as "the Sea of Cooperation" adding that the adoption of any decision relating to the Caspian should be based on the concurrence of all countries bordering the world's largest inland sea.

The two officials also reviewed latest developments in relation to the laying of a trunkline for conduiting Turkmen gas to Europe via Iranian soil and tripartite cooperation with Russia, Ukraine and with other countries of the region.

Iran and Turkmenistan, along with the Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation share the waters of the Caspian.

Velayati To Start Three-Nation Tour 5 Mar

LD2702084895 Tehran IRNA in English 0759 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 27, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati will commence a three-nation tour of Greece, Austria, and Slovakia next Monday to hold talks on promotion of relations, a morning daily said Monday [27 February].

IRAN NEWS quoted an informed source as saying that Velayati's visit to Greece and Austria, both members of the European Union (E.U.), is expected to help develop Tehran's ties with the E.U. as Iran's foremost trading partner.

Commenting on foreign minister's pending trip, the source said Velayati asserted that the E.U. considers Iran to be a prominent market with great potential.

Therefore, both sides are prompted to develop their policies and ties based on mutual interests, the paper said.

The foreign ministry source underscored Iran's stated determination to establish sound bilateral relations with each and every E.U. member nation.

Recent European public opinion has marred some Irano-European relations, the daily said. But this, says the ministry, is due to their lack of awareness of Iranian ideology and culture.

The Foreign Ministry plans on rectifying these misconceptions by establishing broader relations with the E.U. member states and presenting them with a realistic vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Pishin Official Killed for Discovering Hoarded Goods

LD2802164595 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Owners of hoarded commodities in the town of Pishin, in the Sistan va Baluchestan province, martyred an innocent official in charge of Ansar headquarters in charge of inspecting hoarded goods. He was martyred in the course of performing his duties and after discovering a store of hoarded commodities in this town. As a result, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received a report on this cowardly deed from the commander of the basij resistance force. The president, writing on the footnote of this report, expressed regret for this loss and asked Almighty God to grant high status to martyrs of Islam and particularly to this basij martyr.

The report, referring to the government policy to continue the decisive fight against the hoarders and profiteers, says: The basij personnel and the Guards Corps welcome martyrdom along this path, the same as they did in the battlefields. This action is evidence of hostility and the grudge of the leech-natured profiteers with the people. The government, however, is determined to continue the struggle against hoarders and profiteers.

January Oil Exports to Japan Show Drop

LD2802193595 Tehran IRNA in English 1832 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo, Feb. 28, (IRNA)—Iran exported 14 million barrels of crude oil to Japan in January, Japan's ministry of international trade and industry announced here on Tuesday [28 February].

According to figures released by the Japanese ministry, Iran was the third biggest supplier of crude oil to Japan.

Import of Iranian crude oil to Japan, however, fell by 11.8 percent compared with the corresponding period last year.

Japan's total oil imports in January were 155 million barrels of crude, an increase of 2.3 percent compared with January 1994.

Crude from member states of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in January made up of 76.7 percent of Japan's oil imports. The figure was 76.9 percent in the preceding month.

*Bandar 'Abbas Exports Exceed 1.85 Million Tons

95P50060A Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 25 Jan 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Bandar 'Abba—During the past 10 months, over 1.85 million tons of goods were exported from Martyr Bahonar Customs Office.

According to our correspondent, Mr. Hoseyn Aba'i, the director of Bandar 'Abbas's Martyr Bahonar customs office, stated: During the past 10 months, 1,855,579 tons of goods, valued at 877,087,893,675 rials, have been assessed and exported. In comparison with the same 10-month period last year, this is a 476-percent increase in weight.

In conclusion, Mr. Aba'i said: During this same period of time 99,814 passengers were assessed duty fees at the customs offices of Bandar 'Abbas airport and passenger dock.

*Italy To Help Build Plants in Neyshabur, Mianeh

94LA0098A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 27 Dec 94 pp 1, 2

[FBIS Translated Text] London, IRNA—After two years of negotiations with officials of the Iran Steel Industries Company, Italy's Danili [name as transliterated] Company has agreed to the procedure for procuring the $660 million in capital needed for Iran's iron foundries.

The weekly economic publication MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC DIGEST (MEED), in publishing this report, has written: Iran's iron foundries are being expanded to create exports of the products from these units.

An informed official in the Iran National Steel Company told IRNA in Tehran: Italy is doing the financial procurement (financing) on this contract. About 15 percent of the $660 million in needed investment for this project will be paid in advance, while the remainder will be repaid five years after the plants are put to use.

Based on this report, the highest share of this investment is the $330 million that will be spent to expand the Esfahan foundry to increase its capacity to 3.2 million tons per year.

In addition to expanding the Esfahan foundry, the Danili Company will also build two other foundries in the cities of Neyshabur and Mianeh with an ultimate capacity of 1.8 [as published] and 350,000 tons per year, respectively.

*Ramin-Ahvaz Power Plant To Become Operational

95LA0098C Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 1 Jan 95 p 13

[FBIS Translated Text] Economics Division—By the middle of next year [23 September 1995] Unit 4 of the Ramin Power Plant of Ahvaz will go into operation and will be connected in parallel with the national network.

Engineer Mehdizadeh, the executive officer in charge of the Ramin Power Plant, announced the above at a gathering of reporters who had traveled to Ahvaz at the invitation of the Tavanir company to inspect the Ramin Steam Power Plant.

Initially the reporters spent two hours inspecting the various parts of the Ramin Power Plant, including the turbine generators, the steam pressure breakers, the boilers, the chimneys, the steam towers, and also the construction phases of Units 5 and 6, the fuel tanks and the installations along the Karun River including the settling pools, the primary and secondary pump houses, and the equipment storage facilities. Then they took part in a press conference. In his press statement, Engineer Mehdizadeh described Unit 4 as one of the least crucial units at the Ramin Power Plant. He emphasized: In view of the needs in the region, we must put these units into operation quickly. If we receive the necessary support from the banking system, then the aforementioned unit will definitely be put into operation on the anticipated date.

He also announced that Units 5 and 6 at the plant will go into operation late in the years 1375 [21 March 1996-20 March 1997] and 1376 [21 March 1997-20 March 1998] respectively. He explained: With the start-up of the six units of the Ramin Power Plant of Ahvaz, each with 315 megawatts, this power plant, with a total capacity of 1,890 megawatts, will be considered Iran's largest steam power plant.

Mehdizadeh added: This year another power plant project has been added to the rest. It is the project to convert the Ramin units for burning stove oil. This project is one of the projects aimed at replacing the current gas-burning power plant system.

The executive officer in charge of the Ramin Power Plant Project said that the total credits provided until the end of the project of Units 1, 4, and 3 is 129 billion rials [R], and R212 billion for Units 5 and 6. He announced that the physical progress on the units in the Ramin Development Project is 31.32 percent for Units 5 and 6 and 61.41 percent for Unit 4.

He discussed the status of the transfer of electrical power at this power plant. He said: The transfer of production energy to the Ahvaz post from Units 1, 2, 3, and 4 at a capacity of 1,260 megawatts is being done via a 230-kilovolt post and two two-circuit 230-kilovolt lines, and to the northwest post via one two-circuit 230-kilovolt line.

Also, based on the project, the production energy from Units 5 and 6 with a combined capacity of 630 megawatts is to be transferred via a 230-kilovolt post and one two-circuit 230-kilovolt line to Ahvaz Post 2, and to the northwest post via a two-circuit 230-kilovolt line, over a total distance of 44 km.

In his report our correspondent adds: Unit 1 of the Ramin Power Plant of Ahvaz went into parallel operation with the national network in Mordad 1358 [23 July-22 August 1979], Unit 2 did so in Shahrivar 1362 [23 August-22 September 1983], and Unit 3 did so in Tir 1372 [22 June-22 July 1993].

In this regard Engineer Mehdizadeh announced that the reasons for the delay in starting the Ramin Power Plant's various units were the imposed war, the abandonment of the power plant by the contractor (the Russian Technopromexport Company), and the foreign exchange shortages in the nation's banking system.

Likewise at this press conference Engineer Qazi Mirsa'id, executive director of the Ahvaz Electrical Power Production Management Company and the official in charge of operations at the Ramin Power Plant, gave a report on the performance of the three different electrical power-production units at this power plant during the first six months of the current year [21 March-23 September 1994].

Last Friday the reporters sent from Tehran also visited the Dez dam and power plant, 25 km to the north of Dezful, which, at 203 meters high, is considered one of the nation's largest dams.

During this visit the reporters saw various parts of the 520-megawatt Dez dam, including the body, the power plant, the generator floor, the key house, and the control room. In each section the necessary explanations were given by the relevant officials.

*Bridge Connects Masjed-e Soleyman to Shushtar

95P50060B Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 31 Jan 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Shushtar, IRNA—With the inauguration of Shur-e Rahdar bridge in Shushtar city region, dozens of villages in this city region have been connected to Masjed-e Soleyman.

This bridge, inaugurated on Monday [30 January] at the start of the blessed Ten Day's of Dawn, was built at a cost of 335 million rials.

According to Engineer Barzegari, the director of Shushtar's Construction Jihad Office, this bridge is 75 meters long, and has five 15-meter arches and two sidewalks.

Engineer Barzegari added: This bridge was built by Shushtar city region's Construction Jihad Office with provincial credits.

He said the bridge was built to facilitate access to pastures and to gravel and sand quarries, and to provide better health treatment services to the region's villages.

Prior to the construction of this bridge, individuals who intended to go to Masjed-e Soleyman used the Shushtar-Masjed-e Soleyman road.

First Iranian-Designed Container Vessel Completed

LD2802200495 Tehran IRNA in English 1809 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bushehr, Feb. 28, (IRNA)—Construction of the first Iranian-designed cargo and container ship was completed recently in this southern port. The 64 meters long and 15 meters wide vessel, was designed and made by Iran Sadra company, according to international standards approved by Lloyds of London, which enable it to navigate on the high seas, said the director of the company. The vessel is capable of carrying 61 standard containers and 1300 tons of fuel or water.

The managing-director of Iran Sadra, Salemi Zadeh, said construction of two other ships of the same category is underway at the company's docks. The company, established in 1969, is the sole ship-building firm in Iran.

*Tehran-Bandar Abbas Train Begins Operations

95LA0098H Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 7 Jan 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] The first passenger train on the Bandar 'Abba -Tehran route will go into operation in the month of Esfand this year [20 February-19 March 1995].

In announcing the above, Engineer Torkan, minister of roads and transportation, expressed satisfaction with the progress of the Bafq-Bandar 'Abbas railroad project.

He talked about the facilities that have been made available to help increase non-oil exports. He said: With the management organization that has been set up at the Martyr Bahonar Dock at Bandar 'Abbas, this dock's export capacity has increased 40 percent, from an annual 2 million tons to 3 million tons, and this has been done without the slightest cost.

*First Gas Chromatography Machine Produced

94LA0098D Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 28 Dec 94 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] This device is used to identify and determine the purity of all organic compounds. The correspondent from the Central News Unit reports that the gas chromatography device was built using general parts that are found in the country in abundance. It has many applications in monitoring quality improvement and increasing the standard of all oil, petrochemical, environmental, medical, drug, food, and health care products.

It is worth mentioning that this device was produced at about one-fourth the comparable foreign price. It is capable of providing reliable service, and the parts are available domestically. Compared to the comparable foreign device, the domestically made gas chromatography machine can transfer data to a computer, while the foreign models are connected to a recorder or an integrator and have many problems with paper supplies and supplementary services.

*Assembly of Daewoo Cars To Begin

95LA0098G Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 9 Jan 95 p 14

[FBIS Translated Text] Kerman—The assembly line for Daewoo cars will begin operating experimentally in the month of Bahman this year [21 January-19 February 1995].

This was announced during a visit by the governor general of Morteza Bank in Kerman, to the Kerman Vehicle Factory. It was also stated that this factory's products will be marketed in late spring of next year [1995].

According to one of the Kerman Vehicle Factory's managers, this plant has been designed with the capacity to produce 16,000 automobiles per year, but because of foreign exchange shortages, next year 6,000 vehicles will be assembled.

He also discussed the purchase of machinery and equipment. He added: It is expected that 2,500 people will be directly employed when this plant goes into operation.

*First Double-Layer Roller Bearings Produced

95LA0102C Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 12 Jan 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Esfahan—On the 22d anniversary of the opening of the Esfahan Iron Foundry, the first double-layer centrifugal roller bearings went into operation at this factory.

With the production of its first double-layer centrifugal roller bearings, Iran joins a small circle of centrifugal roller bearing producers in the world.

At the ceremonies inaugurating this technology, the iron foundry's deputy director for projects and the designer of these centrifugal roller bearings gave a talk in which he discussed the rapid growth of the iron and steel production industry in our country, including rollers.

He emphasized the importance and the role of the centrifugal roller bearings in the production of steel products and said: The centrifugal roller bearing, as a replaceable part, is considered one of the most complex technologies and one of the most costly parts in the use of foreign exchange. To produce a ton of steel, 1.9 kg of centrifugal roller bearings is consumed, and 5,400 tons of centrifugal roller bearings are needed annually at the Esfahan Iron Foundry. A total of $80 million in foreign exchange was used annually in the nation's steel industry to buy centrifugal roller bearings, and therefore the production of centrifugal roller bearings inside the country is good news for the steel industry.

He added: This project cost about 1 billion rials [R], and it will save $35 million annually in foreign exchange for the iron foundries.

He said: The design and construction phases of the horizontal and vertical centrifugal roller bearings, which were formerly imported, was begun late in the year 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994] by domestic specialists to save on foreign exchange, develop domestic industry, and employ the iron foundry's practical capabilities. They went into production at the beginning of the current year [21 March 1994] with complete success and with superiority over their foreign counterparts.

He added: Currently those in charge of producing the centrifugal roller bearings are employing advanced techniques for centrifugal casting, and with this project's production at the iron foundry, Iran has also joined the other five producers.

This informed official added: The operation of these centrifugal roller bearings on the plant's sheet steel production lines 300, 350, and 500 is satisfactory. In addition it will eliminate two tons of roller bearings from the list of the iron foundry's foreign purchases.

In conclusion he discussed the volume of production of this product. He said: We produced about 2,000 tons this current year, which is 40 percent of the roller bearings needed by the iron foundry. In the first phase we will have about 6,000 tons of production, and after the year 1375 [21 March 1996-20 March 1997] we will be meeting all the country's needs.

Our correspondent reports that news reporters inspected the casting operation for the production of the roller bearings and the various operations to produce the product.

*Neurosurgery, Cobalt Wards Inaugurated in Ahvaz

95P50057A Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 19 Jan 95 p 19

[FBIS Translated Text] Ahvaz—Golestan Hospital's neurosurgery and cobalt wards were inaugurated in a ceremony in the presence of provincial officials.

During this ceremony, reporting on the plans underway, the dean of Ahvaz Medical School stated: At the present time, 170 health and treatment centers are under construction throughout the province, 40 of which will be inaugurated during the blessed Ten Days of Dawn.

According to our correspondent, this hospital's neurosurgery ward is unique in Khuzestan Province. During the imposed war, it provided noteworthy services to the dear wounded and to the citizens of Khuzestan and neighboring provinces.

This 20-year-old ward, despite a grave need for the services it renders and due to the worn condition of the building and its equipment and installations, was closed in Ordibehesht [21 April-21 May] for repair and renovation. The renovations, which covered an area of approximately 800 sq meters, were completed in eight months with an expenditure of 170 million rials [R]. An additional R40 million was spent on purchasing new equipment. Today, with a 55-bed capacity, this ward is ready to resume admitting and treating patients.

Likewise, the expansion of the cobalt ward by 450 sq meters was completed in nine months by the university's technical office, with an expenditure of R260 million.

The above-mentioned project supplements the hospital's old cobalt ward, which covered a 350 sq-meter area and served patients in need of radiotherapy.

Collectively, the new cobalt ward sits on a total of 800 sq meters. With the installation of new equipment, such as kattrun [word transliterated as published], a simulator, teraplan [word transliterated as published], and cobalt 87 [word transliterated as published], which were purchased with a foreign exchange expenditure of over $1.2 million, this ward, designated one of the nation's four centers equipped with cobalt wards, will provide treatmetnt to patients from Khuzestan and the four neighboring provinces.

Pakistan

Air Chief Discusses Defense Cooperation With Iran

LD2802141495 Tehran IRNA in English 1316 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb. 28, IRNA—Iran's ambassador to Pakistan, Mohammad Mehdi Akhondzadeh, discussed Tehran-Islamabad defence cooperation with the new Pakistani air force commander, Marshal Muhammad Abbas Khattak here Monday [27 February].

Marshal Khattak noted that bilateral cooperation in the field of defence could play an effective role in securing peace and stability in the region. Regretting the sad departure of his Iranian counterpart, General Mansur Sattari, who was martyred in a plane crash over Esfahan, central Iran on January 5, the Pakistani marshal said that self-sufficiency programs of the Iranian armed forces was a worthy and positive measure.

Akhondzadeh stressed on Iran's policy of promotion and broadening of ties with the Islamic and neighboring states and added that Iran attached great importance to its relations with Pakistan.

Information Minister on 'Arms Menace,' Law, Order

BK2702161095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Federal Cabinet has decided to enlist the private sector in the transportation of fuel oil from Karachi to thermal power plants upcountry by allowing the use of railway tracks. The decision was made by the cabinet when it met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad today. Briefing reporters on the cabinet's decisions, Federal Information Minister Khaled Ahmad Khan Kharal said about 500 million tonnes of oil will be moved upcountry from Karachi, especially to areas near Multan. Private sector investment for this purpose is expected to be around 2 billion rupees. The private sector will require at least 48 locomotives and 1,300 wagons of 60 tonnes capacity each to transport the oil. [passage omitted]

The information minister said the cabinet directed the Interior Ministry to take measures to control the growing arms menace in society. Various measures are being devised and the provincial governments are being instructed to stem violence. One of the measures is a ban on the open display of weapons.

Replying to a question, the information minister said that law and order is strictly a provincial matter and the federal government has no intention of interfering in the affairs of the provincial governments. The federal government is satisfied that the Sindh Government is handling the situation in Karachi in a satisfactory manner. He expressed his hope that the situation will normalize soon. He said the government is very firm regarding the maintenance of law and order. The government is not against any person or party, but those involved in criminal acts will not be spared irrespective of their political or religious affiliation. He pointed out that inciting others to violence under any pretense is subject to criminal proceedings. [passage omitted]

Editorial Urges Steps Against 'Foreign Agents'

BK0103103095 Lahore PAKISTAN in Urdu 28 Feb 95 p 4

[Editorial: "Foreign Agents in Political Parties!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, during a visit to the General Headquarters [GHQ], was briefed by the chief of the general staff, the director general of military intelligence, and the director general of military operations on the situation at the borders, the defense needs of the armed forces, and the situation in the country, especially Karachi. She was informed that foreign hands are involved in recent Karachi incidents and their agents have infiltrated into various political parties, and that the Karachi administration is under pressure from several sides. The administration despite having had the criminals arrested, had to release them under pressure. Those engaged in vitiating the law and order situation will have to be dealt with without any discrimination.

Although the prime minister's visit to the GHQ is a routine one, it, however, helps toward any assessment of the country's defense needs. This time the meeting reviewed the country's law and order situation in general and of Karachi in particular. It was pointed out that foreign hands have a role in worsening the situation and foreign agents have penetrated political parties.

Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister said that the government is fully aware of both the internal and the external enemies and no step will be spared to deal with them. No improvement in the situation can be expected without correctly identifying the factors responsible for the worsening of the situation in Karachi. It has been repeatedly said that foreign elements are the cause of the worsening situation in Karachi. They are not only inciting linguistic, ethnic, and regional prejudice, but are also fanning the fire of sectarianism. The question is what means should be adopted to neutralize them. Nearly 2.5 million foreigners are living in Karachi. It is an open secret how they secure identity cards and passports. It is not easy now to catch them and make arrangements for their deportation. First, the countries they belong to are not prepared to take them back. Second, how can they be called non-Pakistanis? Attempts were once made to solve the problem by using force, however, no results could be achieved probably because of half-heartedness. This half-hearted approach is also evident in proposing political negotiations; consequently, difficulties are being faced in taking clear-cut decisions.

After it has been revealed that foreign agents have infiltrated into political parties, it becomes imperative to identify those agents and find ways to expel them. Political parties should seek assistance from their workers and cleanse their own ranks of foreign agents. Talking to PPA in Jeddah, President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari expressed concern over the rising trend of sectarianism in the country, termed sectarianism as very harmful for the country and the nation's integrity, and asked political parties to end their differences and work together for the progress of the country and the welfare of its people. If someone wants to overcome the external enemies and deal with the parochial and unlawful elements within the country, then the best and most effective way is to bring an end to the political tension and confrontation and forge harmony among the parties.

The situation in Karachi is getting worse everyday. Every possible step should be taken to stop any further deterioration. A considerable time has already been lost, during which numerous enormous difficulties have arisen. No more time should be wasted now and efforts should be made to inculcate the spirit of collectiveness so that a permanent solution of the issue can be found and the daily loss of precious human lives is checked. It is the duty of sensitive, especially intelligence, agencies to provide complete information about the enemy agents so that appropriate steps can be taken against them. Shooting incidents were reported in Karachi even during the strike on 26 February, resulting in the death of three, while a mosque was destroyed in Hyderabad. All political parties should initiate united efforts to bring this tragic cycle to an end.

Article Views Country's 'Terrorist' Activities

BK2402133895 Karachi DAWN in English 24 Feb 95 p 2

[Article by Mazhar Abbas: "A Training Ground for Terrorists?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The arrest of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf from an Islamabad hotel room, two years after the World Trade Central bombing in New York [WTC] has failed to shed light on the question of his identity.

Who is this slim, bearded young man? What is the country of his origin? The most wanted suspect in the case, Ramzi was tracked down in a joint operation conducted by the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Pakistani Interservices Intelligence [ISI].

The arrest of Ramzi also came as a relief for the local immigration authorities which have come under much criticism for allowing individuals allegedly involved in terrorist activities to enter the United States.

Meanwhile, a debate rages about who will get the two million dollars reward on Ramzi's head the American agents who flushed him out or the Pakistani officials who assisted them—since Interior Minister Naseerallah Babar jumped into fray claiming the Pakistan government's share of the prize. There is also a third contender, Ishtiaque Paker, Yusuf's long-time friend and confidant. Lured by the irresistible reward perhaps, Parker walked into the US embassy and revealed Yusuf's hideout.

Sources say that President Clinton will personally compliment the efforts of Pakistan in the arrest of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf. The US President will be meeting Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on April 11 this year in which the issue of curbing terrorism will be on top of the agenda.

Since the WTC blast in February, 1993, and even before that, US authorities have been communicating with the Pakistan government at the highest level about the entry of illegal aliens, from Pakistan, to the States. The US had even named certain high ranking officials of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) immigration and passport cell whom they suspect of knowingly allowing individuals to travel on forged documents to the US. Following the WTC bomb blast, this pressure was stepped up especially after a report appeared in THE NEW YORK TIMES, which stated that at least two suspects in the bombing had entered the United States from Pakistan. They were identified as Aijaz Ahmad Muhammad (alias Khan Khurram) and Ramzi Yusuf Ahmad (alias Mohammad Azan).

In a letter to the FIA chief in Islamabad in July 1993, the US authorities confirmed that the accused using the above alias departed from Peshawar on August 31, 1992, via PK-339 and left Karachi for New York on PK-703, on September 1, 1992.

Informed sources revealed, however, that when the FIA launched a probe in response to this letter, it was discovered that the embarkation card and other documents belonging to Ramzi Yusuf Ahmad (alias Mohammad Azan) had mysteriously disappeared from the FIA's record room. But his departure along with Aijaz alias Khurram was confirmed by the passengers' list prepared for flight PK-703. The incharge of the record room, Javed Iqbal, said that since all the intelligence agencies, the ISI, FIA and the IB [Intelligence Bureau], had access to the record room, anyone could have taken the missing documents. He also added, however, that since there is no proper system of maintaining records, a lapse could have occurred.

Meanwhile, the real identity of Ramzi Yusuf remains a mystery since he was found to have travelled under several different names on different passports. One immigration card owned by him under the name of Mohammad Azan revealed him to be a British national, holding British Passport no. 92844. According to this, he was born on January 27, 1970, and the passport was issued from Peterbourough, UK, on January 1, 1987. It could not be determined, however, whether the said immigration card number belonged to the same Modhammad Azan alias Ramzi Yusuf or someone else.

Records revealed that Ramzi had earlier entered Pakistan on May 15, 1992, and stayed there till August 31, 1992. But despite hectic efforts by the FBI and the FIA, it could not be confirmed on which flight Ramzi had entered under the name of Abdul Basit. The US authorities asked the immigration authorities to check the passenger list as recorded from February 26 to 28. "We have checked it, but no one by the name of either Ramzi, Azan or Abdul Basit had arrived from the USA," stated the FIA report.

Other documents recovered from Ramzi identified him as an Iraqi national. At the time of his arrest, however, Ramzi was carrying a fresh Pakistani passport with a national ID card under the name of Ali Muhammmad.

The embarkation card of Khan Khurramf alias Aijaz revealed that he is a Swedish national born in a place called Gofeborg, holding passport no 01468963. Investigations revealed that both Aijaz and Ramzi had been living in Peshawar and Pasni where they held meetings with several persons including some Afghan leaders.

Sources also said that both the suspects in the WTC bombing had not given any address for themselves in Pakistan but Aijaz's passport showed the he had visited Pasni. Investigations conducted in this respect revealed that both Aijaz and Ramzi had been working'in Pakistan and had lived somehwere in Peshawar. The immigration card of Aijaz revealed one address: House No. 3, Arabab, Peshawar.

Aijaz had been arrested by the US authorities for trying to enter the US on a Swedish passport. He managed to escape convictions on that occasion but was later thrown into jail once again. At that time, the sheer increase in the number of people coming in from Pakistan on forged documents forced the US embassy to express its concern. In one such letter addressed to the Interior Ministry in 1992, US officials particularly named certain Pakistani officials, including the former director of the FIA, Major (retd) Aamir. The US authorities had suggested that he along with three other officials should be removed.

After the fall of the previous government, all suspected officials were suspended and an investigation was ordered by the Federal Interior Minister Naseerullah Babar into the matter. The government also asked the FIA to probe into any possible links between Major Aamir and the suspects in the WTC blast. It is now thought by some that Ramzi Yusuf's records may have been removed from the FIA record room on the directives of Brigadier Imtiaz, former IB chief and Major Aamir's one-time superior. The FIA, ISI and the IB all had access to the record room. Had the documents been spirited off by the ISI, the US government would have been provided the requisite information. But if the IB was responsible, Major Amir may have been calling the shots through Brigadier Imtiaz.

Sources said that the FIA had completed its probe against Major Aamir and found him guilty of financial corruption, in cohorts with another and former FIA official, chief, passport cell, Choudhry Sharif. The committee recommended not only that Major Aamir's services be terminated but that he be prosecuted for suspicion of harbouring links with alleged terrorists, Ramzi Yusuf, Aijaz and Major Aamir, however, managed to flee the scene.

The Ramzi arrest has boosted the morale of the local authorities, and according to sources, the FBI is now getting ready to launch a massive hunt for the arrest of another wanted criminal who may be hiding in the country—Aimal Kansi, accused of opening fire on two CIA officials.

The Government of Pakistan has meanwhile also cracked down on immigrants, particularly those Arab nationals who came to Pakistan for the purpose of jihad in Afghanistan. They have now been declared "suspected terrorists" by their respective countries.

Sources also said, that the FIA has already completed investigations confirming that Pakistani soil could have been used for plotting international terrorist activities by these aliens. In fact, attacks on certain Arab rulers may have been masterminded here, for instance, Ramzi Yusuf was also suspected of involvement in a plot to kill Egyptian President Husni Mubarak.

The Pakistani government has asked the respective Arab states to accept their nationals back into their countries. Sources also said Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has issued directives in this respect and recently some foreign nationals belonging to Sudan and Egypt were handed over to their respective governments.

"Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto wants to go to the United States with a clean record as far as fundamentalism, terrorism and drug barons are concerned. In the next two weeks, also the wanted drug smugglers would be handed over to the US government," a senior government official told this correspondent.

However, another setback occurred when three drug smugglers wanted by the US who were to be handed over to US officials, recently escaped from a Peshawar prison.

While the mystery shrouding persons like Ramzi or Aijaz may never be cleared up completely, for the time being the Pakistan government has scored a point before the PM's visit to the US.

Organization Condemns Attack on Newspaper Office

BK0103101895 Lahore THE NATION HEADLINE NEWS SERVICE in English 0753 GMT 1 Mar 95

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KARACHI (PPI)-Pakistan Newspapers and Periodicals Organisation (PNPO) at an extraordinary meeting Monday [27 February] condemned violence and burning of the NAWA-I-WAQT and THE NATION offices in Karachi. A resolution passed unanimously by all members of the PNPO said the destruction of the offices and production plant of the NAWA-I-WAQT, Karachi, by a group of masked men armed with guns and jerrycans of gasoline is one of the blackest chapters in the entire history of the Pakistan Press. During this attack on the Karachi premises of one of Pakistan's oldest mass-circulation dailies, the lives of 150 journalists and Press workers were threatened and several employees escaped within an inch of their lives. The NAWA-I-WAQT building kept burning for over three hours but the local administration and rangers failed to protect the building, the equipment, the archives and members of the Press from armed terrorists and arsonists. By, this act, some of the rarest photographic archives of the Quaid-i-Azam and the freedom movement have been lost forever, it said. The Sindh Government has demonstrated an inexplicable distance from the whole matter as custodians of law and order in this province. They have demonstrated a callous indifference to the fate of the fourth estate. They have left the newspaper and its employees to fend for themselves. Article 19 which guarantees freedom of the Press in the Constitution has been left in a shambles. Those elected representatives of the people, who have vowed to defend this Constitution, have failed to protect either the Constitution or the lives of the people.

Defense Minister Leaves To Visit Troops in Bosnia

LD2802135695 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 1100 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The defense minister, Mr. Aftab Shabhan Mirani, left Islamabad for Sarajevo today to celebrate 'Id al-Fitr with the Pakistani troops stationed as UN peacekeepers in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He has been asked by the prime minister to visit the troops and celebrate 'Id with them. Talking to newsmen at the airport before his departure, Mr. Mirani said that he would convey the nation's gratitude to the army personnel for their dedicated services for keeping aloft the flag of Pakistan.

About 3,000 Pakistani troops have been working in Bosnia as part of UN peacekeeping operations since September last.

Editorial Suggests Reconsideration of U.S. Ties

BK2702105495 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 27 Feb 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Diplomacy for American interests"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The French government have asked four American diplomats and one American citizen to leave their country immediately as they were involved in some activities which violate international diplomatic norms. There is nothing unusual about such events but the fact that the diplomats of a self-proclaimed sole superpower were caught doing what their mandate and understanding with the host country did not envisage, and that, too in a country which has been an American ally for as long as American history remembers, is much more than the usual diplomatic surprises.

The Americans are so self-centered, introvert, and parochial that they would not hesitate for a moment to betray an old friend, to deceive an ally, and to hoodwink a collaborator in order to stay under the "dignified" and much propagated umbrella of "American interest." They would topple a government if it refuses to buy their expired frozen orange juice, they would threaten you with economic boycott if you do not sell them what they want and at a price that suits them, and they would engineer public rallies, coup d'etats, and all other conceivable methods of intimidation to serve their celebrated American interests. All this is done through a carefully laid process of spying, espionage, and data collection through a host of American Agencies under the supervision of the CIA. Many times, apparently innocent projects involving health, education, sanitation and other areas of social and economic development are carried out through sponsorship and collaboration in order to penetrate into sensitive areas of different countries. Even purely academic exercises on cultures and civilisations become highly politicised after they receive the touch of Uncle Sam's magic wand.

One could have never imagined them doing this mischief in a country which more than two hundred years ago contributed so much in their intellectual as well as political liberty from England. From General Lafayette to General De Gaulle and later, two centuries proudly demonstrate this relationship yet it could take only four diplomats and one American citizen to betray this legacy. Whereas the French decision to expel them was the most appropriate, we don't think the Americans would learn any lesson from this and would stop meddling in the affairs of others. But there is a lesson for others who are having a honeymoon with the lady holding the torch of liberty or even contemplating one. And that lesson is that don't trust Americans even when you feel that they are desperate enough to do their part of the deal, they could turn around and, without any remorse or regret, behave as if nothing had transpired between them and the concerned party.

Countries like Pakistan need to learn this lesson more intelligently than others. Our history also provides brief moments of excellent relations with Washington but many more periods of interfering with and monitoring our economic and political developments with the result that each phase of this relationship had resulted in us becoming more obliged, more sensitive to their dictates, and more vulnerable to old and new dangers whereas the US continues to exploit all our possible potentials to further its own interests. And all this is happening with a parallel programme of spying, collecting information and sharing it with those who detest the very existence of Pakistan. Islamabad needs to look into these dimensions of our diplomatic relations with the United States which have become more of a burden on our social and political fortunes than a transparent interaction between two countries. We need to look into this fact also, as to why and how, our each embrace with Washington leaves us more emaciated, more brittle, yet more willing for another hug?

Editorial Protests Against U.S. Translation of Koran

BK2702150995 Islamabad KHABRAIN in Urdu 24 Feb 95 P 4

[Editorial: "Incomplete English Translation of the Holy Koran; the Unholy Audacity of the U.S. Publisher"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This newspaper has reported that an edition of an incomplete English translation of the holy Koran is being sold in Pakistan these days. The edition, titled "Al Koran"—the U.S. Edition—and published by a New York publishing house contains only 110 of the 114 divisions of the holy Koran. The last four divisions of the 30th chapter have not been translated. This incomplete English edition of the holy Koran was published in 1993 and is available at "Mawara Publications" in Lahore.

This is very saddening, rather tragic, that in spite of reports published in the press about this incomplete edition of the holy Koran, neither the government took any note of this nor have the religious and academic circles lodged any protests. The owners of the agency selling this incomplete edition have also not paid any attention to this.

The edition has been in circulation in Pakistan for about two years, but no Muslim has ever protested, even though it is thought that nothing prejudicial to Islam or Islamic traditions could be ignored here. This translation is not only incomplete, but it also does not contain a list of Koranic verses at the beginning or end of the edition. It seems that the U.S. publisher has made a mockery of the holy Koran, which is tantamount to hurting the feelings of the Muslim community. The most deplorable thing is that this English edition is available at a shop in Lahore, but the owners of the shop did not notice the mistakes and stop the sale of the book. It was their duty as Muslims to stop the sale of this edition, to raise the voice of protest, and draw the attention of the government and all Muslims at large toward this.

We urge the government to take up the issue of the printing and publishing of this incomplete edition of the holy Koran with the U.S. Government and to lodge a strong protest. The copies of this edition should be confiscated from the Lahore shop and every other place where they are available. The people should be informed through radio, television, and the press that if they possess copies of this incomplete edition of the holy Koran, they should hand them over to the government or destroy them. If these copies are allowed to remain intact, they may cause several problems in the future. We appeal to the religious scholars to raise the voice of protest in their Friday sermons today against the unholy and loathsome audacity of this U.S. publisher and to ask the Government of Pakistan to take the necessary steps in this regard.

Editorial Urges U.S. Intervention in Kashmir

BK2502092795 Rawalpindi HAIDER in Urdu 16 Feb 95 p 4

[Editorial: "The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Should Pay Attention to UN Resolutions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Robin Raphel, U.S. assistant secretary of state, has stated that the United States is willing to help resolve the Kashmir issue if Pakistan and India so request. Raphel is the assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs, and it is certain that she has all the records pertaining to Pakistan and India, as well as other countries of South Asia. If Raphel carefully reviews those records, she will understand that in petitioning the United Nations about 47 years ago, India appealed for intervention in the Kashmir dispute. At India's request, a resolution for the right of self-determination was adopted and the United Nations effected a cease-fire between the two countries, although Pakistani freedom fighters had already gone into Srinagar. Had the United Nations not achieved the cease-fire at the request of India, Pakistan would have hoisted its flag in the middle of Srinagar. It was unfortunate, however, that Pakistan depended entirely on the United States rather than relying on Russia. India sought asylum in Russia's lap, so Russia blocked a solution to the Kashmir dispute by exercising its right of veto. Although the United States has become the only superpower, the State Department does not even remember that India itself appealed 47 years ago for intervention and a solution to the dispute. Pakistan's position has always been to resolve the issue through peaceful negotiations in light of the UN resolutions. In this respect, Pakistan has extended invitations to all nations for mediators and a solution of the dispute. What sort of invitation does the U.S. assistant secretary of state need? If Raphel takes the time to review India's appeal at the United Nations, she will understand that India invited mediation a long time ago and that the United Nations, of which the United States is also a member, adopted two resolutions—not one—for resolution of the dispute. When the two countries express their willingness on this issue now, it is the moral responsibility of the United States to help find a solution to this vital problem without any formal request and honor the resolutions adopted by the United Nations.

Editorial Suggests Bhutto Resignation

BK2802023795 Islamabad KHABRAIN in Urdu
27 Feb 95 p 10

[Editorial: "Karachi: Benazir Government Should Resign, or the President Should Play His Constitutional Role"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Twenty-two people were killed in an attack by armed gunmen on two Shiite shrines in Karachi on 25 February. These attacks were carried out immediately after the morning prayers at Pir Ilahi Bux Colony and Shahid Millat Road—the two places considered comparatively peaceful areas in Karachi. Incidents of terrorism followed in other parts of the city in which seven more people were killed. Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto and opposition leader Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif expressed grave concern over these attacks. The prime minister said that those who shot people while they were offering prayers do not deserve any leniency. They will be dealt with sternly. The prime minister directed Sindh Chief Minister Syed Abdullah Shah to arrest those involved in these attacks and take tough action against them. The opposition leader said that the government has failed; the civilized world has no example of such an insensitive and cruel government. A civilized government begins to tremble with the incident of only one murder, but here dozens are being killed everyday with the government remaining unperturbed.

The horrible incidents of terrorism in Karachi on 25 February have undoubtedly proved that the provincial government has failed to maintain law and order in Karachi—the provincial capital and the country's trading center. This failure will, however, be considered the failure of the federal government because the Sindh chief minister is actually being controlled from Islamabad. In particular, all important decisions relating to Karachi are being made by the prime minister. Even the appointment of the administrator of the Karachi municipal corporation was also made by the prime minister herself. Viewed in this context, therefore, the Sindh chief minister can be considered helpless. In view of what happened in Karachi and what is happening now, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Abdullah Shah should resign.

The situation in Karachi on 25 February was the manifestation of the breakdown of the administrative machinery. Press reports say that the chief minister is accompanying the president in performing the minor pilgrimage to Mecca. Senior officers of the civil administration and police were unaware of the shooting incidents even long after they occurred. Armed people continued to indiscriminately fire on M.A. Jinnah Road and forcibly closed shops with police and administration personnel nowhere around the scene. The deputy inspector general of police of Karachi has acknowledged that the government's intelligence and security system have proved to be weak, and secret agencies failed to provide information.

The attack on Karachi Shi'ite shrines is an act of terrorism aimed at creating panic and inciting sectarian riots. Allama Hasan Turabi, leader of Taherik-i-Fiqah-i-Jafria, has justifiably said that we do not blame Sunnites for these killings, adding that some people want to incite Shi'ite-Sunnite riots. Turabi, who is also the secretary general of the organization for Sindh, said at a press conference that Shi'ites or Sunnites are not involved in attacks on Shi'ite or Sunnite mosques; some third group is involved in them. However, the provincial or federal government has failed to impede these activities.

Altaf Hussain, chief of the Muhajir Qaumi Movement, in an open letter to President Farooq Ahmad Leghari has alleged that government agencies are involved in terrorism. He proposed that the murder of four brothers a few days ago, the attack on two Shi'ite shrines on 25 February, and other incidents be probed under the supervision of Supreme Court judges so the truth behind these incidents could be exposed. We agree with the statement of the Sindh secretary general of the Tehrik-i-Fiqah-i-Jafria and the proposal by Altaf Hussain to set up a commission headed by a Supreme Court judge and implement its suggestions so as to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future.

Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto has directed the Sindh chief minister to arrest the criminals involved in the two incidents and give them severe punishment. It is very unfortunate that she issued such directives on several occasions in the past, too; however, no criminal was arrested nor was anyone punished. In view of the way the prime minister controls Sindh, she herself should accept the responsibility of the incident on 25 February and earlier and should herself resign or at least seek fresh mandate from the people. We would like to request the president to review the country's tragic situation.

Currently, the president is now in Saudi Arabia. While at the Ka'ba and the prophet's mosque, he should consider whether it is permissible for the Benazir Government to stay in power even after what is happening in the country. Has this government shortened the people's life, and has it failed to protect the people's life and property? If the president answers these questions in the affirmative, then he should immediately take steps against the Benazir government and conduct fresh elections by appointing a neutral prime minister.

The president should not evade his constitutional duty simply because his own party is in power. He should realize that he is accountable to God and think of the oath of office he took and fulfill his constitutional obligation, thereby enabling himself to be honored by God and the people of Pakistan.

Sri Lanka

PRC Delgation Arrives, Affirms Preferential Credit

BK2702145595 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Chinese Government, while welcoming Sri Lanka's interest in economic cooperation, has assured Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar that there would be no difficulty in granting preferential credit in Sri Lanka. The question of wheat supplies requested by Sri Lanka will be taken up with the appropriate Chinese authorities and receive the fullest support of China's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation. Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar has also been told by the State Education Commission of China that a request for an increase in development oriented scholarships would receive favorable attention. The minister [words indistinct] has thanked the Chinese Government's scholarships already made available this year, the Foreign Ministry said. The early submission of Sri Lanka's proposal has been requested for discussion by a joint commission to be set up between the two nations for that purpose, the ministry said. A Foreign Affairs Ministry release added that the ancient cultural ties between the two countries were recalled and that the present visit of Foreign Minister Kadirgamar was an opportunity to strengthen these links.

A delegation from the People's Republic of China arrived here yesterday headed by Mr. (Qu Zhiyangthen), secretary general of the Chinese Association for International Understanding. This is the first official delegation from China to come here since the PA [People's Alliance] took office. The delegation will be here till 4 March and will meet Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike, Speaker K.B. Ratanayake, and other cabinet ministers.

Bank of China To Open Colombo Branch

BK2802134795 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Chinese Government has indicated that a branch of the Bank of China will be opened in Colombo in the near future for the expansion of trade and cultural links between the two countries. Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar said so at a meeting with the business community of Guangzhou in Southern China's special economic zone last week.

The minister, who expressed the hope that Sri Lanka will be able to establish further economic cooperation with Guangzhou through joint ventures, invited businessmen to visit Sri Lanka for a closer look at the potential here. A Foreign Ministry press release on the minister's visit added that the minister congratulated China on the phenomenal economic development already achieved. The minister referred to the immense investment potential, particularly for local resource-based export industries, identifying rubber, coir fiber products, gems and jewelry, ceramics, and infrastructure development.

He invited the business community to visit Sri Lanka to examine the possibilities of such cooperation and informed them of the concessions offered by the government and the possibilities of approval and assistance by the Board of Investment which he described as a most efficient one-stop shop.

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